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CASSELL'S
HISTORY OF THE FRANCO-GERMAN WAR



"OUR FRIENDS, THE ENEMY."

W. G. Cubitt

CASSELL'S

HISTORY OF THE WAR

BETWEEN

FRANCE AND GERMANY

1870-1871

VOLUME II

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PREFACE.

THE Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71 was undoubtedly one of the most important struggles of modern times, whether as to its immediate results, or its probable consequences in the future. It has materially affected the balance of power in Europe. It has removed the seat of military predominance from France to Germany. It has annulled some of the most important conquests of Louis XIV. It has aggrandised the Teutonic at the expense of the Celtic race. It has shattered one Empire and restored another; given renewed opportunity for the great Republican experiment of France; and prematurely ripened a number of political and social problems which have been gathering force for years, but which now imperiously demand attention, on pain of terrible convulsions if they be undervalued or set aside.

The greatest conflict of the present generation may be said to have terminated the first act of that period of renewed military development which began, at the close of 1851, with the *coup d'état* of Louis Napoleon. During the thirty-six years which had elapsed since the peace of 1815, Europe had enjoyed an epoch of repose, untroubled by great wars, scarcely disturbed even by rumours of war. Many dangerous questions slept beneath the surface; but men were content to suppose that they would sleep there for ever. The revival of the Napoleonic tradition roused the nations from their apathy. It was taken for granted that, with a Buonaparte at the head of affairs, France would again become the most aggressive Power on the Continent. The event proved that this was an idle fear; for, of the only two European wars of the second Empire, previous to the final contest (which was the effect of an old antagonism wherewith dynastic considerations had little to do), the first had for its object the restraining of Russian ambition and the maintenance of the *status quo*, while the second was directed towards the emancipation of a grand historic race from a military thraldom which had long outraged the moral sense of the world. Yet it is certain that the election of the Prince President to a ten years' dictatorship, and his subsequent elevation to the Imperial dignity, excited in the principal European Governments (including even our own) a sense of apprehension, resulting in the enormous armaments to which we are now accustomed. Thence, by a slow but certain process, ensued the extraordinary aggrandisement of the Hohenzollerns as the most formidable sovereigns of the Continent; and the mutual jealousy of France and Prussia, on this very ground of armed predominance, led to the war which created Germany, and, for a time at least, ruined France. It is not too much to say that the effect of that war has been to transfer the leadership of the Continental States from Paris to Berlin.

Fortunately for the historian, this portentous war was described with a greater fulness and particularity than any other that has ever occurred. Several gentlemen of the highest ability, the most trained powers of observation, and the most admirable devotion to their difficult and often perilous work, were sent out by all the chief journals (English and foreign), and reported the great events of the war, and even its minor characteristics, with a

minuteness and a vivid realism to which previous history had been almost a stranger. The system of newspaper correspondence began with the Crimean war; but it was carried out with a more ample range during the war of 1870-71. Posterity is indebted in no small measure to the intelligent, experienced, and courageous men who followed the red track of that prodigious struggle.

To draw into a focus the vast materials thus scattered abroad—to organise what, in its first appearance, was necessarily hasty, fragmentary, and incomplete—to produce, by a laborious comparison of the chief available authorities, a connected, popular, and honest narrative of the great Franco-Prussian war—such has been the object of the present work. Whatever interest or value these pages may contain is largely, indeed principally, due to the letters furnished, in the very heat and excitement of the contest, by the correspondents of the English and foreign press, but especially by the former. It has been held advisable in several instances to quote the exact words of these writers, since they possess that quality of vividness which can only be caught from actual contact with the event, and which cannot be repeated at second hand. In the main course of the narrative, however, the method pursued has been that which is common to all histories. The various antecedent accounts have been examined and checked by one another, and the result has been given with as near an approach to accuracy as could be attained. This has sometimes proved a task of no small trouble.

One thing has been particularly aimed at—a rigorous impartiality between the belligerents. A writer who belongs to a nation wholly distinct from two contending countries, forfeits his high privilege of neutrality if he make himself the undiscriminating organ of either. This does not mean that his history is to be colourless and emasculated; that he is to forbear from applying principles, or from judging men and their actions by the rules of acknowledged morals. It simply means that those principles and rules are to be applied fairly in every direction, and not with a view to supporting at all hazards a foregone conclusion. In the present work, occasion has been found for criticising severely both the Germans and the French; but it is hoped that no injustice has been done. At any rate, this History is not the mouthpiece of either combatant. In connection with most of the great events, the reports and proclamations of both belligerents have been cited, in whole or in part, that the reader may judge for himself between the two.

The tremendous convulsion of the Commune has been included in the History of the War, because it grew so immediately out of the struggle with Prussia that the story could not have been told completely without that final chapter. In the compilation of this portion of the work, both Communistical and anti-Communistical writers have been consulted, that the facts of a very dark and mournful episode may be fairly stated.

Of the illustrations to these volumes little need be said. They reproduce the terrible, sad, strangely dramatic incidents of a stormy time, with a power and picturesqueness which all who have eyes can see and apprehend.

EDMUND OLLIER.

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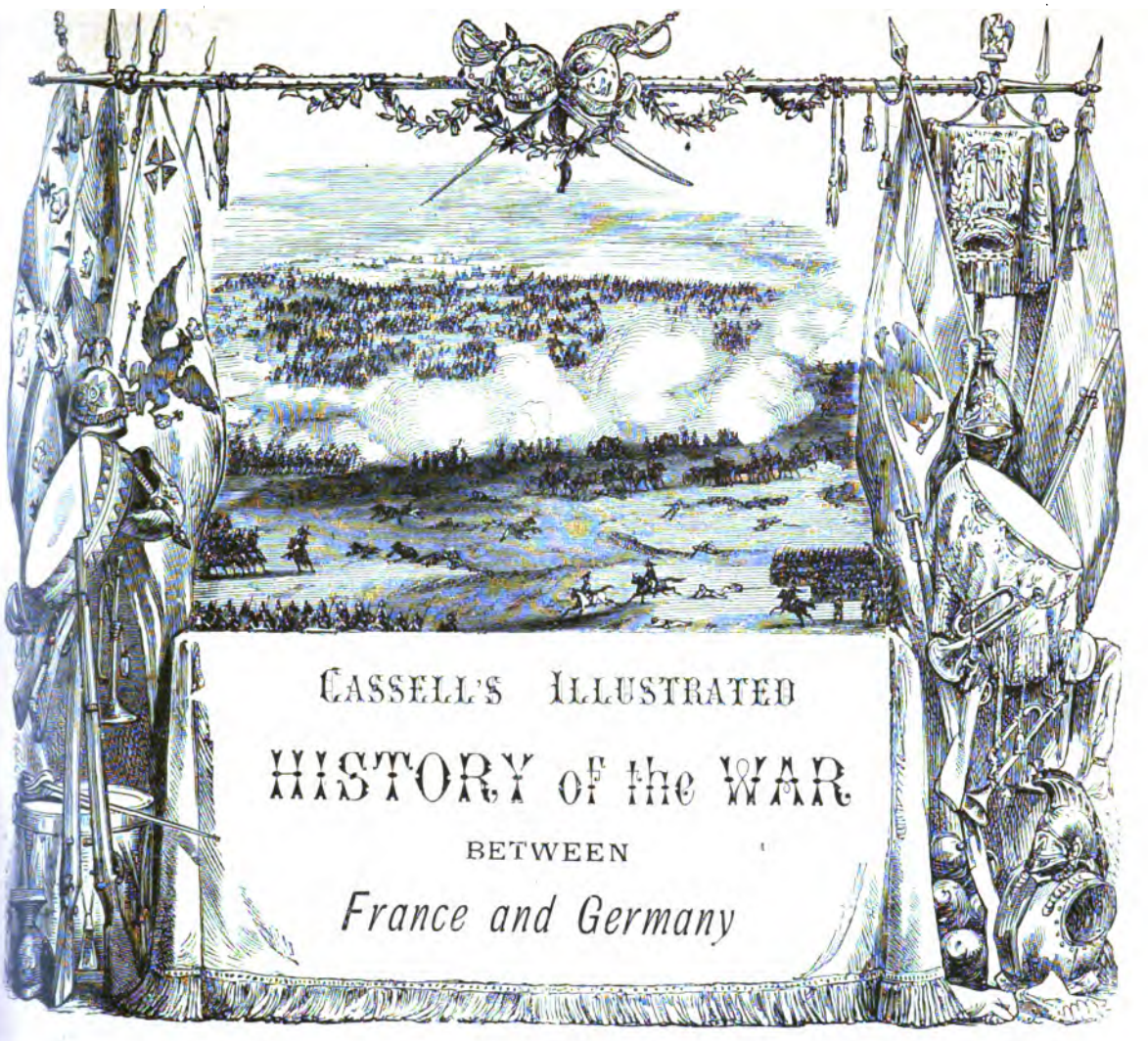
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CASSELL'S ILLUSTRATED HISTORY of the WAR BETWEEN France and Germany

CHAPTER I.

Affairs on the Loire—Advance of Chanzy against von der Tann on December 1st—Defeat of the Bavarians—Hesitation of the French—The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg and his Chief of the Staff—Renewed Fighting on December 2nd—Progress of the Engagement—The Result a Drawn Battle—Desperate Struggle at the Château of Goury—The Dead and Wounded—French and German Accounts of the Battle—Preparations of the Germans for the Next Day—Symptoms of coming Disaster at Orleans—Proclamation of de Paladines—Action of December 3rd—Defeat of the French—Bad Generalship of the French Commanders—Grief of M. Gambetta—Official Account of Events following the French Reverse—Vacillation of de Paladines—Narrow Escape of M. Gambetta from being taken by the Prussians—Fighting round Orleans (December 4th)—Evacuation of Orleans, and Entry of the German Troops—Want of Spirit of the French Soldiers—Scene in Orleans Cathedral—Disastrous State of the Bavarian Army—Alleged Superstition of d'Aurelles de Paladines—A French Soldier's Prayer—Apotheosis of M. Gambetta—The French Peasantry and the Pope.

UNIFORMITY of action was the principle on which the great efforts of the Army of Paris and of the Army of the Loire were mutually based. Each force was to support the other, and the Germans were to be crushed between two advancing walls of iron and of fire. We have seen in the last chapter how the Army of Paris, after a brief success, was compelled to retire from the task; and it will now be necessary to return to the Army of the Loire, whose movements, up to the battle of Beaune-la-Rolande, on the 28th of November, together with the disastrous hesitations of the next two days, have been previously described. D'Aurelles de Paladines having made up his mind to renew his attack on the German positions, a strong body under General Chanzy was sent forward on December 1st. It will be recollected that Chanzy commanded the left wing of the French line, and that the right wing of the Germans, to which he was opposed, was for a time weakened by the rather considerable interval which separated the forces of von der Tann from those of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg. Before

the operation of closing up this gap was entirely effected, Chanzy, at the head of the Sixteenth Corps, and de Sonis at the head of the Seventeenth, fell on von der Tann's Bavarians, and drove them back. The movement was rather hastily determined on in consequence of the arrival in the French camp, on the previous day, of M. de Freycinet, charged with a message from M. Gambetta, to the effect that General Trochu was making an attempt to break out of Paris, and must be supported by an advance of the Army of the Loire towards Pithiviers, where the legions of Prince Frederick Charles were by that time massed. Although this forward movement was considered by a council of war to be dangerous as matters then stood, it was undertaken in deference to the orders of the War Minister; and a large stock of food, representing eight days' rations for 300,000 men, was prepared, with the intention of sending it after the army, directly Pithiviers was taken.

The design seemed as if it were about to succeed. When Chanzy (who had the chief command in these operations) advanced from Patay against von der Tann on the 1st of December, the troops of the latter general were staggered by the fury of the French onslaught. The Bavarians formed the vanguard of the army of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, which was drawn up in two lines in front of Toury, on the Paris and Orleans Railway. General Chanzy, in his official report on the battle, said that he found the enemy strongly entrenched at Guillonville, Terminiers, and Goniers—villages situated from ten to fifteen miles east of Châteaudun, and not far from Arthenay, where some of the previous operations of the war took place. The battle lasted from noon until six o'clock in the evening, and was contested on both sides with great determination. The German force, according to Chanzy, comprised 20,000 infantry and cavalry, and from forty to fifty guns; but the first division of the French army carried successively the advanced positions of the enemy, and afterwards Monneville, Villepain, and Faverolles. The Bavarians were dislodged from these places at the point of the bayonet, and at night the French bivouacked on the field. Chanzy spoke with especial praise of the handling of his artillery, which was worked with equal boldness and precision. The Germans, he affirmed, lost heavily, while his own casualties were not serious; and among the prisoners brought in were many officers. At the close of the engagement, von der Tann (who was thus for the second time defeated in the neighbourhood of Orleans) withdrew in the direction of Loigny and Château Cambray. The chief honour of the day was ascribed by the French commander to Admiral Jauréguiberry, an old sailor who had for some time been giving his services as a land officer to the Tours Delegation. Under the Empire, Jauréguiberry is said to have been not in favour. He took part in the war in China, and protested against the pillage of the Summer Palace by General Montauban, afterwards Palikao. The mother of the admiral was an English lady, and he is said to have a good deal of English bluntness in his character. Among the other prizes of the French on this occasion were two guns; and altogether the affair was of a nature to inspire the troops and the Government with confidence. It was ordered that a *Te Deum* should be chanted in the French churches in acknowledgment of this success; and for a moment it appeared as if the Army of the Loire and the Army of Paris were about to join hands. Had the two corps of Chanzy pushed on still further north, instead of being content with occupying at nightfall the positions held by the Bavarians in the morning, it is possible that they might have severed the connection between von der Tann and the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg. But the French commander seems to have been apprehensive of trusting himself too far from his base of operations, and the adversary took advantage of his hesitation. The two divisions of the right wing of the German Army of the Loire completed their junction during the night, and thus put themselves in a position to repair the temporary disaster.

A few days before the battle just related, one of the correspondents of the *Daily News* had an interview with General von der Tann, who appeared to suffer very severely from the censure which had been pronounced on him for his defeat before Orleans on the 9th of November—a misfortune which he was extremely anxious to retrieve. "It was a retreat," he said, "but it was the salvation of my army. However, such services are not always recognised." He was now about to renew the fight with the French on the former ground, and hoped for success. Of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, the correspondent spoke highly in a personal sense, saying he was a genial man, active and intelligent, though apparently not very remarkable as a soldier. "The method of appointing a leader of a large army in Germany," said this writer, "is peculiar. A prince desirous of renown receives an appointment to a general command, without its being absolutely essential that he should have any considerable military genius. However, that he may not commit any great error, he receives a skilful chief of the Staff, who really directs the movements of the army to the glory of the com-

mander. After the engagement before Orleans, when the Bavarians were compelled to retreat, the Grand Duke received command of the Bavarian Corps, the Seventeenth and Twenty-second Divisions, and the Fourth and Sixth Cavalry Divisions; and he had for his chief of the Staff Colonel Krenski. This officer reflects in many respects the character of his chief. His restless activity caused the whole army over which he virtually commanded to march from the 9th to the 30th of November, on an average eighteen miles a day, with only five days of rest. The army was almost entirely exhausted and without shoes. Another disadvantage of this long march to the north-west was that the Garde Mobile and new recruits for the Loire army had time to organise themselves efficiently; and while the army of 30,000 was wasting its time in driving the French armed peasants from Dreux and Châteauneuf, the Army of the Loire, which acquired new spirit from their success, was rapidly increasing in strength by the addition of many thousand good troops. Finally, on the 1st of December, the same German army which on the 14th of November commenced to retire before the French from Toury towards Chartres, Nogent, and Dreux, returned without any reinforcements to precisely the same spot." Ultimately, the forces of the Grand Duke, including those of von der Tann, were placed under the general direction of Prince Frederick Charles; as, only a short time before, von der Tann's command had been merged in that of the Grand Duke. The latter, moreover, was now furnished with a new chief of the Staff in the person of Lieutenant-General Stosch, who was said to be specially acquainted with the wishes of the King as regards Orleans; but the probability is that Krenski was considered to have been too reckless of his men in the pursuit of the French Army of the West.

While the Grand Duke and his officers were sitting at dinner at Janville on the evening of the 1st of December, news arrived that Chanzy had attacked the Bavarians under von der Tann, and driven them back on Orgères. Nothing could be done that night; but early the following morning the Grand Duke rode with his entire Staff to the front, and head-quarters were shortly afterwards removed outside the town. The country all about is a vast plain, thickly sprinkled with small, poor villages, with windmills, and with châteaux—a territory very well adapted to the operations of war. The day was clear and cold; frost lay on the fields and hedgerows, and winter began to be severely felt by the soldiers of both armies. It was long before the Grand Duke and his Staff arrived at the scene of that renewed fighting which it was certain would take place on the morning of December 2nd. Twenty villages were passed, and at length the field of battle was reached. The struggle of the previous day had been renewed by the French, who, at eight o'clock A.M., attacked the wearied and disheartened Bavarians with a sudden rush, and drove them from their positions. They rallied, however, with great gallantry, but were hurled back no fewer than four times, and were at length unable to resist any longer. Their places were then supplied by the 75th and 76th Hanseatic Regiments, belonging to the Seventeenth Division, who came on to the field about eleven o'clock. The battle now gradually extended towards the east, and after a while reached beyond Arthenay in that direction. It had a disposition, however, to concentrate itself at the two extremities, especially on the right wing of the German line. At half-past eleven, the Germans, owing to their reinforcements, began to recover themselves, and to press the French back from the positions they had gained; but a little later, Chanzy's troops got the upper hand once more, and the German artillery and infantry were again compelled to recede. This, however, threw no discredit on the Germans, who were for the most part exhausted by long marches, and had to encounter a much larger force than their own. The French, moreover, were extremely well armed with cannon, mitrailleuses, and chassepôts; and, to add to the disadvantages of the Germans, the two Hanseatic regiments had had scarcely any previous experience of war. Nevertheless, they resisted the fiery charges of their enemy with dogged resolution, and inflicted, as well as suffered, great losses. The houses in the line of battle were soon in flames from the bursting shells, especially those of the poorer classes, which were thatched with straw and built of slight materials; and, as darkness came on, the country was illuminated by the glare of burning villages. During the whole day, the battle swayed to and fro with varying fortune, and both armies gained and lost a great deal of ground, with a corresponding expenditure of life. Much of the fighting took place round the village of Bazoches-des-Hautes, from which the battle has been named. Towards mid-day, the village of Loigny was held by the French, who loopholed the houses and walls, and kept up a hot musketry-fire from their position of vantage; while from a château on a ridge in the rear of Loigny the French artillery replied briskly to the fire of the Germans. At about one P.M. the village of Loigny was set on fire, and at that moment the state of the battle appeared to the *Times* correspondent to be this: that on the German left in the neighbourhood of Arthenay, and on the high road

leading to Orleans, the French were engaged by the whole of the Twenty-second Division (Wittich's), with half of the Seventeenth (Treskow's); and that behind these, at an interval of about two miles, the Bavarian corps, and the other half of the Seventeenth Division, were engaged in the operations of the day. But he confesses his inability to speak with precision, owing to the impossibility of seeing the whole of a large battle-field from any one point. The German forces on the left wing he calculated at about 30,000. The right wing, commanded by General von der Tann, counted an equal number. Loigny was taken and re-taken several times by both armies; but finally, towards dusk, it was occupied by the Hanseatic Brigade, who captured two cannon there. The French, however, maintained themselves on the ridge by the château at the back of Loigny, and the conclusion of the day's fighting was of that doubtful character which is best described as a drawn battle. It is true the *Times* correspondent says that, although there was a period, about the middle of the day, when the issue of the fight seemed doubtful, the French never had a chance of winning after half-past twelve, notwithstanding that they brought up heavy reserves; and he adds that they were pushed back between three and four miles altogether, retreating steadily. But the tendency of this gentleman to see everything from a German point of view may be judged from the fact that he set down the unquestionable French victory of the previous day as a French defeat, alleging that, after a brief success at the commencement of the affair, Chanzy's troops were repulsed with heavy loss. As he was not himself a witness of the battle on December 1st, his information was of course derived from the German military authorities, who seem, as usual with commanders in a difficulty, to have described a failure as a triumph; and he appears to have been similarly influenced with respect to the encounter of December 2nd, his personal knowledge of which was necessarily confined to one section of the field. The *Daily News* correspondent with the German Army, who preserved a more impartial habit of mind, said that the fight was apparently without any result, and that, on passing along the entire line of battle, he saw nowhere any sign of decisive advantage on either side. Writing on a later day, the same authority stated that at night the Germans occupied almost the same ground as at the beginning of the engagement; that the Twenty-second Division, under the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen, was repeatedly driven back in its attack on the French forces about Arthenay, and was only saved by the arrival of the Mecklenburg Brigade; and that on the right, before Orgères, the Bavarians, entirely discomfited, were unable to offer any further resistance, so that the Hanseatic Brigade alone held the French in check. Towards evening it was everywhere loudly asked, "Where is Prince Frederick Charles? Why does he leave us alone in this way?" Prince Frederick Charles was at Pithiviers; and had he marched in time to the relief of the Grand Duke and General von der Tann, the action of the 2nd of December might have been another German success, instead of a struggle without any definite issue. He did indeed despatch a body of troops towards the scene of the fighting; but it did not arrive soon enough to take any part in the events of the 2nd, though it was of service on the following day.

Some of the sharpest fighting on the 2nd took place round an old château at Goury, with a little wood about it. The *Times* correspondent arrived at this ancient mansion just as the German artillery, which was retiring for a fresh supply of ammunition, came sweeping round an angle of the building.

"Its spacious court-yard, flanked by two towers, and entered by an archway, was filled with soldiers, and the rooms to the right and left of the principal entrance were already full of German and French wounded, though it was not yet mid-day. Ascending one of the towers of the old château, I found myself in an admirable position for seeing the battle. The room was full of soldiers, who had loopholed the walls; but the enemy were not within range, or rather were not thought to be so, until suddenly a large body of infantry, which was supposed to be German for the first moment or two, unexpectedly opened a hot fire upon a regiment drawn up beneath the walls of the château. Then from every loophole and crevice in the towers and walls rolled an incessant fire of rifles, and the chassepôt balls seemed to rain upon the roofs and walls in reply, until by degrees the old castle became the centre of the fight, and, as it seemed to me, with every possible chance of being taken. The lieutenant in command of the party in the loopholed chamber told me that it had been occupied at two o'clock that morning, just ten minutes before the French could reach it, and that, in fact, the struggle for this position had opened the battle. Unfortunately, it was not yet over, and the room was getting so full of smoke, and the clatter of the rifle-balls on the roof was so unpleasant, that, fearing they might be followed by shot and shell, I descended to the courtyard. Here, too, the ubiquitous chassepôt bullets kept 'pinging' about. The wall on the side of the French attack was very low; behind it were lying the German riflemen, drawing a fire from the enemy upon them, and consequently into the yard, which made it advisable for those who wished to cross to make a run for it. Every available cover concealed a rifleman; but the enemy were closing round, and the fire becoming hotter, until it seemed to me that the moment was rapidly approaching when the château

and all that it contained would fall into the enemy's hands. The courtyard being as bad as the tower, and the rooms full of groaning wounded, I ascended again, like 'Sister Ann,' to see if any help was coming, and arrived just in time to see, through a loophole which a soldier kindly vacated, the Hanseatic Brigade come up at the double on the right flank of the enemy, while Prince Albrecht's cavalry appeared most opportunely on the left. The French did not await the charge of the cavalry. They had made a gallant fight of it, and it was no shame to them if, attacked on three sides, they fell back on the hamlet, in which, I have already said, were French reserves. As they did so, the men of the Free Towns opened a terrific fire upon them, covering the field with killed and wounded: it was a great relief in one sense, but so dearly purchased that it was hard to say which was most painful—the prospect of being involved in a hand-to-hand fight inside the castle, or the sight of the slaughter which had preserved one from such a fate."

The village of Goury was carried by the Germans after a hot fight, which strewed the ground with dead and wounded. Throughout the day, the French, on the admission of the Germans themselves, fought remarkably well, showing more *élan* than they had exhibited for a long while. The latter part of the action consisted chiefly of artillery-firing, and it was not until after dark that the combatants suspended their deadly work. A bright red sunset and a clear frosty moon came to look down on the battle-field; and the sufferings of the wounded from cold were extreme. "The shells kept bursting and the chassepôt bullets thudding into the ground more and more wildly," says the *Times* correspondent, "as it became too dark to take aim; and I was standing talking to General von der Tann on the fortunes of the day, when his boot was cut open by a rifle-ball, fortunately without wounding his foot. Two of his Staff had been wounded earlier in the day. No matter where you are, or how far from the enemy, the grasshopper sound of these balls buzzes about in the air in every direction, and when the battle-field is a plain there is nothing to check their progress." At night there was a fall of snow, and many must have perished of the inclement season. It is said that the French and German wounded amounted together to 3,000; and it was not possible for all of these to be got in by the ambulance-wagons much before morning.

The *Daily News* correspondent remarked that the ground was very well adapted for cavalry charges, and that opposite Arthenay the Fourth Cavalry Division was extremely active. At one time this gentleman met along the road a herd of more than a hundred riderless horses, which galloped by in great terror, most of them badly wounded, and covered with blood. A whole cavalry regiment had been met by a deadly mitrailleuse fire. "I saw," continued the correspondent, "eighteen hundred French prisoners; among them a general. When I left the field of battle at eleven o'clock at night, the women and children and old men were wandering about in the intense cold in search of shelter, having been driven out of their villages by the flames. The troops were mostly in bivouacs without covering, and expecting a renewal of the combat. The moon was shining brightly, lighting up the whole plain, except where its light was obscured by the black smoke from the burning villages." Every house and shed that could be rescued from the flames was applied to the use of the wounded. The staff of medical men was numerous, and the work of carrying off the injured soldiers was continued throughout the night.

So little did the French regard the action as a defeat that, on the evening of the 2nd, d'Aurelles de Paladines wrote to the Bishop of Orleans:—"We have had a series of successes—I do not say victories: I reserve that word for to-morrow." On the other hand, the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg telegraphed to King William, under date "Janville, December 2nd":—"At eight o'clock this morning, our troops having advanced, a battle commenced in the direction of Bazoches-des-Hautes. At half-past nine, the enemy, after a heavy fight with the Seventeenth Infantry Division, followed by the First Bavarian Army Corps, and supported by the Fourth Cavalry Division, was driven beyond Loigny. The Twenty-Second Infantry Division, supported by the Second Cavalry Division, took Poupry by storm. The enemy was driven back to Arthenay. The Sixteenth French Army Corps was beaten near Loigny, and the Fifteenth near Arthenay. Many hundred prisoners and eleven guns were taken. The loss of the enemy is considerable. Our loss cannot yet be estimated, but is much smaller." Such are the direct contradictions with which History has to deal. The truth appears to lie between the two extremes. Both armies were partially successful in special directions; but the sum-total of the day's losses and gains seems to present a tolerably even balance.

Nevertheless, the position of the French was critical. Detached from the main body of their forces, and presenting a long and straggling line to the enemy, they were open to a crushing defeat as soon as the Germans should bring up sufficient reinforcements; and this was done in the night. During the day, two corps of Prince Frederick Charles's army had crept along the forest of Cer-

cottes towards Chevilly, thus placing themselves in the rear of Chanzy's division, and cutting off the Eighteenth Corps, under Bourbaki (who had been removed from the Army of the North to take a command in the Army of the Loire), which was obliged to fall back towards Châteauneuf, on the south-east of Orleans; and now, all through the long hours of darkness, artillery and fresh regiments were moved to the front. Some symptoms of coming disaster were visible in the neighbourhood of Orleans on the night of the 2nd, when numerous wagon-trains were observed returning from the north. Stragglers from the army were loitering about the city itself. Great excitement was visible in the streets, and frequent questions were asked as to the state of affairs with Chanzy. A vague presentiment of evil was evidently abroad, and the absence of precise intelligence made this feeling all the greater. De Paladines, however, was in good heart, or affected to be so. We have seen that he counted on a victory for the 3rd of December, and he appears to have thought that the grand exploit of relieving the capital was about to be achieved by himself and his colleagues. His change of mood on this subject, if it was real, and not simply due to the necessity of carrying out the directions of M. Gambetta (for, up to a recent date, he had regarded the advance of the army with great apprehension), had probably been caused by the news of a successful sortie from Paris. After the receipt of this intelligence, on December 1st, he issued a proclamation to his men, saying:—"Paris, by a sublime effort of courage and patriotism, has broken the Prussian lines. General Ducrot, at the head of his army, is marching towards us: let us march towards him with equal vigour." Despatches were sent to General Briand at Rouen, and to General Faidherbe at Lille, begging them to support the movement by a concentric march on Paris; and M. Gambetta telegraphed all over France that the hour of success had come.



GENERAL D'AURELLES DE PALADINES.

The favourable anticipations which had been formed on the 1st, and which had not been seriously diminished by the events of the 2nd, were speedily dashed to pieces on the 3rd. It soon became apparent that the Army of the Loire would have to fight, not for the deliverance of Paris, but for the preservation of Orleans. The main



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body of the army was disposed with a view to cover the latter city; but the movements of Prince Frederick Charles were so skilfully directed, and so rapidly carried out, that the position of d'Aurelles de Paladines was gravely imperilled early in the day. It was arranged by Prince Frederick Charles, in concert with the other generals, that the Ninth Corps should advance on the road from Paris, that the Third should proceed from Fontainebleau, and that the forces of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg should move forward on the road from Chartres to Orleans. Early in the morning, the Ninth Corps moved upon Arthenay, where the French (who were occupying a line extending about eight miles east and west) were attacked by a heavy artillery fire. The regiments occupying that place were not as strongly entrenched as it had been supposed they were. Some slight earthworks had been thrown up in front of the town, and the stone walls of the houses were loopholed; but that was all. Nevertheless, the French defended the position for two hours and a half; but at eleven o'clock A.M. they were driven out, and their place was then occupied by the 11th Regiment of German Infantry. Sullenly and slowly retreating, the French disputed the ground with great tenacity, and it was not until three o'clock in the afternoon that they were forced as far back as Bucy-le-Roi, a village four miles south-east of Arthenay, and bordering on the forest. The artillery, which up to this time had almost monopolised the combat, now ceased firing; the German cavalry advanced, and the opposing line was broken. While the French centre was being thus shattered, the two wings were equally unfortunate. A portion of the army belonging to the right wing was separated from the rest, driven to the east, and forced up against the forest. An attack was also being conducted in the opposite direction, on de Paladines' left flank. This attack began at noon; and the French were thus assailed on both sides and in front at the same time. A fierce struggle took place at the village of Dourcy, and the most determined resistance was opposed, though vainly, to the German advance. The Bavarians did not come into the field until four o'clock in the afternoon, when they were hotly engaged with the French left at Sougy. The German line was now pushing forward in the form of a crescent, of which the right horn was at Sougy and the left at Bucy-le-Roi, while the middle, or most projecting part (the convex side of the crescent being towards the French), was at Chevilly, the last post-station on the north of Orleans, which was vigorously bombarded by the assailants, and energetically defended by the force stationed there. As the day advanced, the French were pressed still farther back in every direction; and de Paladines now found it necessary to order a general retreat upon Orleans. It was only possible, however, to accomplish this movement in a very partial degree. The French centre (commanded by General Pallières) did indeed manage to reach the camp which had been formed outside the city; but the right and left were driven far asunder in opposite directions—the one recoiling across the Loire by Jargeau, to the south-east, while the other fled along the north-western bank of the river by Marchenoir and Beaugency, to the south-west.

The defeat this time was thorough and unquestionable, and it was the harder to be borne by the French because it was heralded by some partial successes. The troops employed by de Paladines were the best at the disposal of the Republic; and, as pointed out in an official German account of the Loire campaign, their position north of Orleans was an admirable one, with the single exception of its having a river in the rear, which, in case of defeat, would compel the army to crowd over the bridge, pursued by the enemy. "Naturally strong by woods and heights," continues this account, "the position was reinforced by entrenchments and all the varied resources of the engineering art. The huge forest of Orleans, rendered impassable by the utmost industry and skill, served to cover de Paladines' main body, which was disposed upon fortified hills." The Francs-tireurs and Mobile Guards in this army formed less than a third of the total number; the remainder were regulars; and both the professional soldiers and the volunteer corps are said to have been well equipped and organised. It would appear, therefore, that the army ought not to have been so completely routed, especially as for some hours it fought with spirit and constancy. The truth is, however, that the French again failed in generalship and in mastery of the science of fighting. Their line was too far spread, their divisions too widely separated, for concerted action; and they were worsted bit by bit through the better management of their adversary. The *Gazette de France*, published at Tours, admitted this, in terms which looked very like an indictment of de Paladines. Concluding its summary of events on the Loire, it said:—"Thus the Army of the Loire has been beaten on the whole line without a general action, each corps having fought a separate battle." It was added, however, that no stores were lost, nor any field-pieces; that the soldiers fought well, and were in good spirits; and that the army was not broken up. An unfortunate mistake on the 2nd showed the astonishing ignorance as to military

manœuvres which pervaded the army. D'Aurelles de Paladines (according to one of the newspaper correspondents) wished to make a change of front on his left, pivoting on his centre. An order was given to the left to make a retrograde movement, more or less, according to their distance from the centre; but as soon as this movement began, "nothing could convince the wing that they were not retreating, and they thought they had better retreat in good earnest." It is clear, also, that de Paladines was nervous about encountering the enemy. While the fighting was at its height on the 3rd, a verbal order to retreat was sent to Admiral Jauréguiberry, who was in command of eighty-five naval guns in good positions at Chevilly. He refused to retire unless he had a written order from the Commander-in-Chief. This was speedily sent him, and then, with a heavy heart, he spiked his guns, and withdrew.

To the nation generally M. Gambetta put the best face he could upon the matter. He issued a proclamation, saying that the Army of the Loire had discontinued its forward movement owing to the resistance of the enemy, but that the troops occupied strongly entrenched positions, in which they would remain for a while, postponing their advance until a better opportunity offered. In the meantime, General Ducrot, at the head of the Army of Paris, would be able to act more freely in consequence of not finding before him those masses of troops which it was supposed were going to meet him, but which, added the War Minister, were really detained north of Orleans. This was intended for the reassurance of the public; but in fact M. Gambetta was angry with de Paladines, and dismayed at the prospect before him. He had indeed much cause for apprehension. The best of his armies had been shattered, and the relief of Paris, from a seeming probability, had again relapsed into a dream.

What made the matter worse was the inability of the Government to come to anything like a clear understanding with d'Aurelles de Paladines as to what should next be done. An official report published on the 5th of December revealed the dissensions between the general and the War Minister with a singular frankness. From this report, together with other and later sources of information, it appears that after the engagements fought on the 2nd and 3rd of December—which, it is stated, caused the enemy great losses, but which also arrested the advance of the French Army of the Loire—the position of affairs suddenly appeared disquieting to General de Paladines. Late on the night of the 3rd, therefore, he telegraphed that it was necessary to evacuate Orleans, to retreat on the left bank of the river, and to conduct his army, in three separate detachments, towards Gien, Blois, and the Sologne. To this communication M. Gambetta instantly replied (also by telegraph) :—"Your despatch of to-night causes me the most painful stupefaction. I can see nothing in the facts it mentions which can justify the desperate resolution with which it concludes. Thus far you have managed badly, and have got yourself beaten in detail." M. Gambetta then proceeded to point out that de Paladines yet had at his disposal an army of 200,000 men, with more than 500 cannon, entrenched in a fortified camp protected by naval artillery. His men were still in a condition to fight, provided their leaders set the example of courage and patriotism. These exceptionally favourable circumstances appeared to the Delegate Government at Tours to enable the general to offer further resistance at Orleans; and to attempt this seemed to them a course dictated by plain military duty. To evacuate the city would—irrespective of its military consequences—be an immense disaster. "It is not," continued M. Gambetta, "at the very moment when the heroic Ducrot is fighting his way to us that we can withdraw from him: the time for such an extremity has not yet come. I see nothing to change, for the present, in the instructions which I sent you last evening. Effect a general movement of concentration, as I have ordered." At eight o'clock on the morning of Sunday, December 4th, General de Paladines rejoined :—"I am on the spot, and am more able than you are to judge the situation. It gives me as much grief as you to adopt this extreme resolution. . . . Orleans is surrounded, and can no longer be defended by troops exhausted by three days of fatigue and battle, and demoralised by the heavy losses they have sustained. The enemy's forces exceed all my expectations, and all the estimates which you have given me. . . . Orleans will fall into the enemy's hands to-night or to-morrow. That will be a great misfortune; but the only way to avoid a still greater catastrophe is to have the courage to make the sacrifice while it is yet time. . . . I therefore maintain the orders which I have given." In consequence of this resolution of the commander, the Delegate Ministers at Tours held a consultation, and unanimously agreed to send the following telegraphic despatch to General de Paladines :—

"The Government was of opinion that Orleans should be firmly held with the aid of defensive works, and that you should not increase your distance from Paris. But, as you assert that a retreat has become

necessary, and that the troops would hold their ground, the Government charges you to carry out the retreat, the necessity of which you affirm, and by which you represent that greater national misfortunes may be avoided than the evacuation of Orleans. I therefore cancel my orders for active and persistent concentration at Orleans and in the circle protected by your defensive works.

"Give the necessary orders. The generals at Tours are placed under your chief command.

"GAMBETTA.
"CRÉMIEUX.
"GLAIS-BIZOIN."

This despatch was sent off at eleven in the morning, and in about an hour General de Paladines replied as follows:—"I change my plans. I send to Orleans the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Corps" (which had retreated towards Beaugency), "and have summoned the Eighteenth and Twentieth" (which had crossed the river to the south-east). "I am organising the defence. I am at Orleans, at my post." This plan of concentration (the official report continued) was exactly what the Minister of War had for the past four-and-twenty hours counselled and directed. In order to make sure that the concentration was being carried out, M. Gambetta left Tours for Orleans by special train; but at half-past four in the afternoon the train was forced to stop at the village of La Chapelle, owing to the road being occupied by a detachment of Prussian cavalry. At the same moment a distant cannonade was heard, and it was evident that a battle was progressing before Orleans. M. Gambetta accordingly made a retrograde movement to Beaugency, whence he hoped to proceed by carriage to Ecouis. At Beaugency he was unable to obtain any news, and it was only at Blois, and not until nine o'clock in the evening, that he received the following despatch from Tours:—

"Since noon I have not had any despatch from Orleans, but I am now in receipt of a message from Inspector Rilevet, saying your train will be taken on to La Chapelle. I have since received another telegram from General d'Aurelles de Paladines, saying that up to the last moment he had hoped to be able to avoid the evacuation of Orleans. All his efforts, however, were powerless, and the town would be evacuated that night. There is no other news.

"FREYCINET."

In consequence of this intimation, orders were at once issued from Blois to facilitate the retreat of the troops. On returning to Tours at three o'clock in the morning of the 5th, the Minister of War found awaiting him a message from General Pallières, stating that the enemy had demanded the evacuation of Orleans at half-past eleven on the night of the 4th, threatening to bombard the town in case of non-compliance; that, as they (the French) were to have left that night, he had accepted the conditions in the name of the Commander-in-Chief; and that the naval batteries had been spiked, and the powder and war material destroyed. There was also a message to the effect that Orleans was entered by the enemy at midnight, and that the Germans (who were said to be almost entirely without ammunition) had made scarcely any prisoners. It was added in the official report that the retreat was carried out in good order, but that there were no tidings from General d'Aurelles de Paladines, and that he had not sent any message to the Government.

The escape of M. Gambetta from the hands of the Prussians was exceedingly narrow. The train was stopped, about ten miles from Orleans, by running into a barricade which had been thrown across the line by the Germans; and the Minister and his private secretary were a good deal hurt by the collision. At the same time, some Uhlans lying in ambush fired on them; but they got off without further damage. It is said that at Beaugency M. Gambetta averred, in answer to the inquiries of an excited crowd, that all was going well at the front, and that good news would soon be received.

The re-occupation of Orleans by the Germans was not so peaceful a proceeding as at one time seemed probable. The French did not evacuate the town without a sanguinary contest. The German Third and Ninth Army Corps, under General Manstein, attacked and carried the railway station and the Faubourg St. Jean de la Ruelle; and at the same time the detachment under the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg advanced from the west to the vicinity of the city. More than 10,000 unwounded prisoners fell into the hands of the Germans, together with seventy-seven guns, several mitrailleuses, and four gunboats on the Loire Such, at least, was the account given by the conquerors. The French, on the other hand, averred that the retreat was effected without any other sacrifice than the heavy naval guns of the entrenched camp before Orleans, which were left spiked; and it was added that no portion of the field-artillery or military train was abandoned. These statements were afterwards denounced by the German official *Moniteur de Versailles*, in plain language, as "arrant lies;" and in the same place "the lawyers" of the Government of the National Defence were characterised as "even worse liars than were the generals of the Empire." Seeing, however, that the same journal laughed at the credulous supposition of amiable enthusiasts that it would tell the whole truth, and

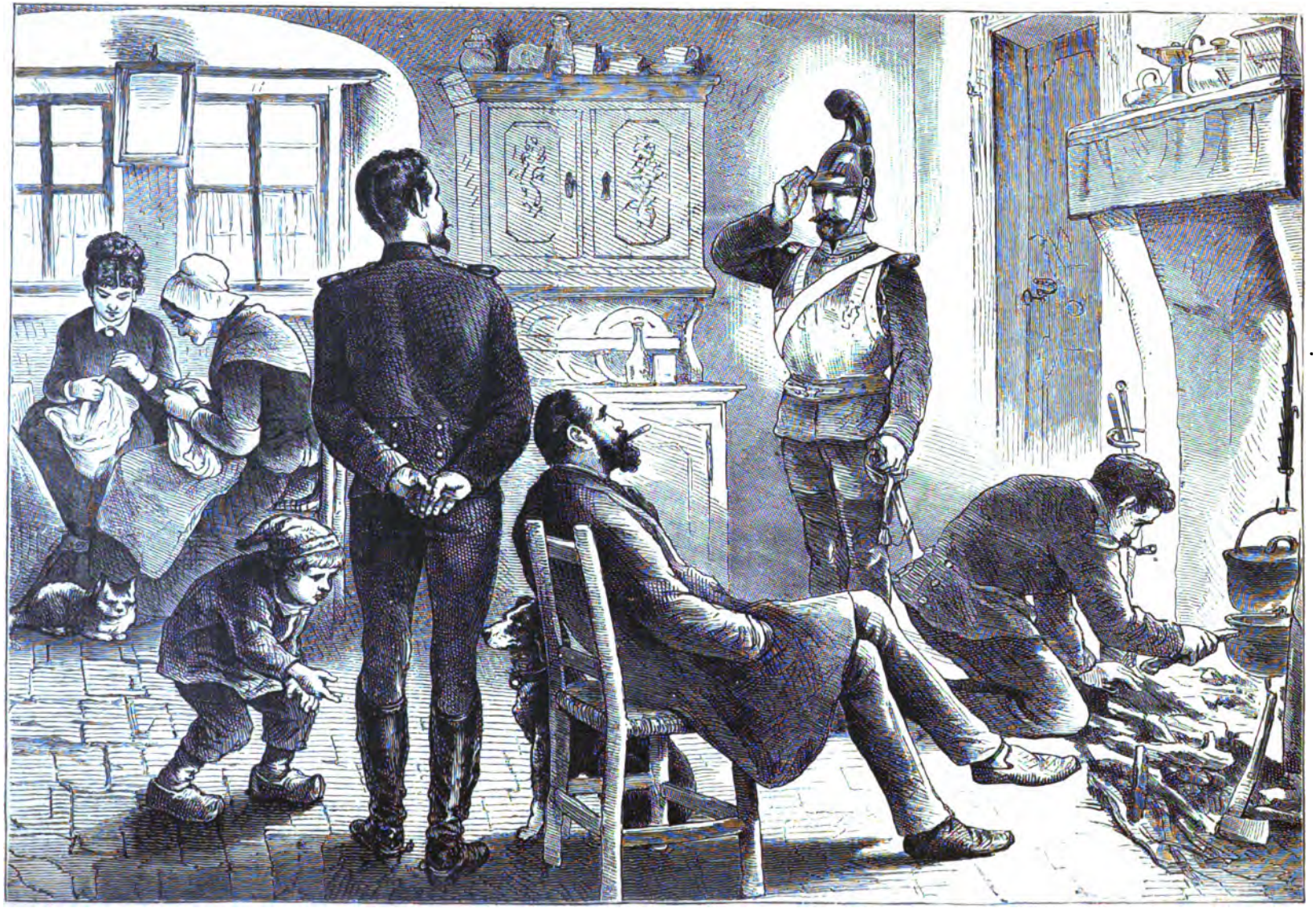
recollecting how often the *suppressio veri* is equivalent to the *suggestio falsi*, it is perhaps not being very uncharitable to doubt the competence of this authority to pronounce on a question of truthfulness.

In the neighbourhood of Orleans, the 1st and 6th Uhlan Regiments, under General von Bernhardi, defeated two French battalions, surprised three squadrons, and captured a battery of four guns. Everywhere the defenders of the town found themselves overwhelmed, and a precipitate flight set in. The *Daily News* Special Correspondent with the French Army of the Loire saw symptoms of a retreat as early as six o'clock on the morning of the 4th. Large numbers of troops, wagon-trains, and ammunition-wagons were crossing the bridge over the Loire to the south side of the river. In the roads outside the city the same thing was observable; yet it was also evident that a battle was going forward. Fighting had in fact commenced as soon it was daylight. The centre of the action was about Cercottes, where the wood was being desperately defended. French lines of infantry were drawn up just north of Sarran, and the cannonading came nearer and nearer. By-and-by, a rush of panic-stricken soldiers gave note of what might be expected. The correspondent continues :—

"It seems that a regiment of Chasseurs d'Afrique and one of Spahis, seeing a line of infantry in front of them giving way, turned round, and ran along a road as hard as they could tear, helter-skelter, all mixed together. 'What is it?' asked a friend of mine, an Englishman, to an officer, when the rout began. 'Why,' said the officer, 'look! the Prussians are posting their batteries, and are going to open upon us!' The roads were now covered with stragglers of every corps. We were soon obliged to fall in to the main road, and to join the stream of retreating artillery and infantry which filled up the causeway. At every minute there would be a stoppage; then we would advance again a few minutes, and then stop. During this, the noise of the fighting in our rear was growing every minute nearer and nearer, and before we were at the gates of Orleans we could hear the mitrailleuses defending the roads. My companion and I were among the last who entered Orleans. The rest of the army remained in the various lines of trenches to protect the retreat. On reaching Orleans I went to the church, where the Anglo-American Ambulance have established themselves, and from the steeple of which I expected to be able to get a view of the surrounding country. However, the mists of evening had fallen, and all I could see was the flash of the guns; but I could see enough to show me that the enemy were not above two miles from the gates of the city. The National Guard was turning out and going to the trenches. Every street of the town—at least, every principal street—was choked with artillery and infantry They continued to cross the bridge all the evening. General d'Aurelles, after stopping about an hour at the Hôtel du Loiret, took himself off with such speed that he left some of his aides de camp here, who were captured. It was thought the men in the trenches might hold out all night, and then, with the big guns that had been posted round the place, they might keep off the enemy for some time, till the army had completely evacuated the city. The troops continued to pass through faster and faster. At about eleven, batteries of artillery passed through galloping; probably they were some of the guns which had protected the retreat. The bridge of boats was burning. It was expected that, after the last man had passed, the stone bridge would be blown up; and when I went to bed very late at night, I expected every minute to be awoke by a fearful explosion, and the rocking of the house where I have my billet. It was not so, however. The Prussians were in the town soon after twelve, and the firing on the quay the following morning consisted of a few shots exchanged by the French, who still loitered on the other side of the river, and the Prussian advanced guard in the town. At nine, the whole Prussian army marched in triumph into Orleans, bands playing and colours flying. The number of men taken in the town was not great. The losses were very slight on the French side, owing to the men not holding well. Half the French artillery never fired a shot. Battalions of infantry which had not been under fire walked off the field, saying they were retreating."

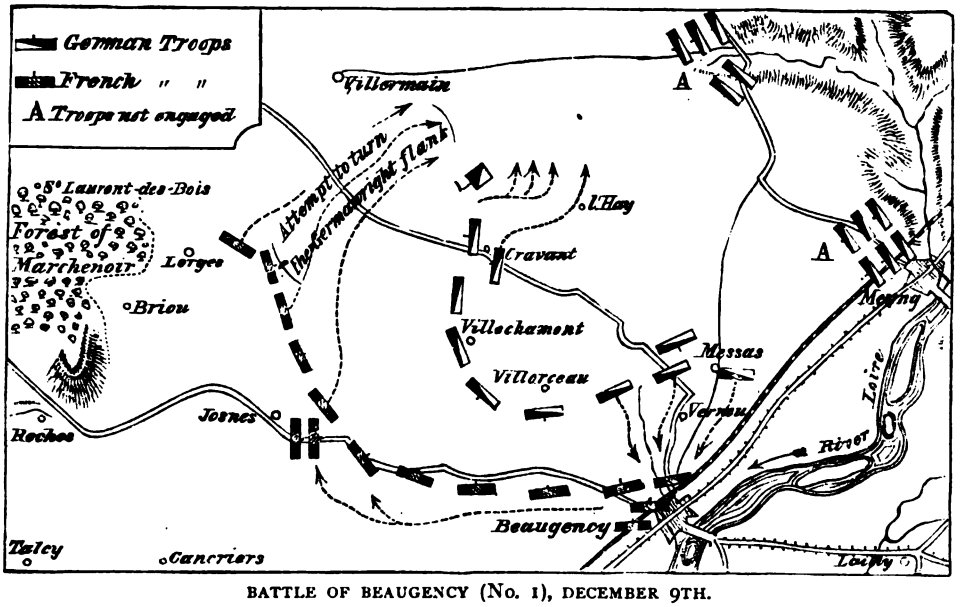
The African horsemen mentioned by this correspondent had arrived not many days before. They presented a very picturesque appearance with their Arab costumes, and it was thought they would be a match for the famous Prussian cavalry; but the hope was delusive. Outside Orleans, some of Prince Albrecht's Uhlans rode down and almost annihilated a body of Spahis.

The evacuation of Orleans was resolved on in consequence of the closing in of the Germans, which left the French no longer any hope of successful resistance. The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg was therefore asked to allow the French army three hours' grace to enable it to get across the bridge; failing which, the bridge would be blown up, and the defence continued. As the Loire was full of ice at the time, and the throwing over of a pontoon-bridge would in consequence have been a long and difficult task, the Grand Duke consented, and the evacuation commenced shortly afterwards. All firing ceased between eight and nine o'clock in the evening, a little before which (according to the *Times* correspondent) the Marine Artillery, consisting of fourteen guns, and posted at the railway crossing, was captured by the Germans, with all the Marine gunners still in the battery. It is said that these gunners fired with great accuracy, and stood



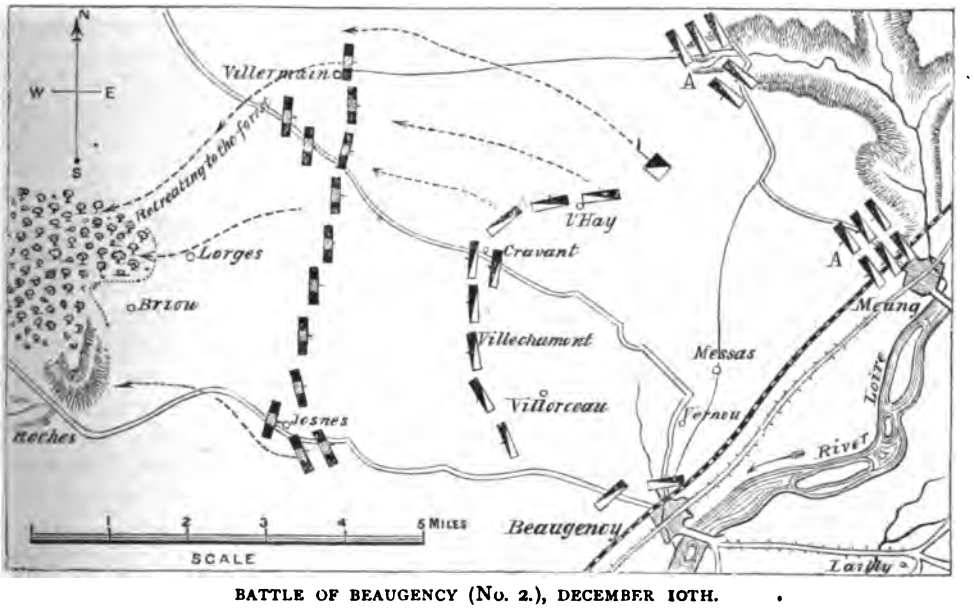
IN POSSESSION.

to their pieces with exemplary courage. The French head-quarters crossed the river about eleven o'clock at night; but many of the officers had already gone to bed, and, not being aware of the arrangement morning of the 5th. The occupying force appears to have behaved very well, and some of the Bavarians were recognised by the householders as old customers of the previous occupation.



BATTLE OF BEAUGENCY (No. 1), DECEMBER 9TH.

The French are repulsed on their right, and are forced to evacuate Beaugency; but on THEIR left, in attempting to turn the GERMAN RIGHT, they gain some temporary advantage.



BATTLE OF BEAUGENCY (No. 2.), DECEMBER 10TH.

The French troops are driven from all their positions, and forced to retreat to the Forest of Marchenoir.

that had been come to, were taken prisoners. Colonel Reilly, Military Attaché to the British Embassy at Tours, was one of the persons left behind. Prince Frederick Charles passed the night at Montloie, about four miles from Orleans, and the main body of the German army entered the town on the

Many of the French soldiers were so disheartened by this accumulation of defeats, that they voluntarily sought the enemy, and gave themselves up as prisoners. Some of these, speaking to the correspondent of the *Times*, said they had surrendered because they were "bored;" that they

were disgusted with the war, and perfectly indifferent to Alsace and Lorraine. They seemed to be cowed as much by the cold as by the Germans, and evidently preferred life in a German town to the hardships and vicissitudes of a winter campaign. All this was undoubtedly very shocking; yet it is difficult to blame men who had been dispirited by almost constant ill-luck, and who had but little reason to feel confidence in the ability of the generals placed over them. In the magnificent old cathedral of Orleans, the French prisoners (those, at least, who were unwounded) were positively merry. Large numbers were there, together with their conquerors, grouped round great fires, which had been lighted on the pavement of the edifice itself, and from which dense volumes of smoke rose to the roof, making the air thick and heavy. Little regard for the character and associations of the place had those wild and rugged men. Zouaves sang light-hearted songs; others talked and jested; and at length some one began to play the organ. At first the performer executed a few slow and solemn strains; then suddenly the mood changed, and the brisk notes of a jig rang through the cathedral. A clever Zouave, with some musical knowledge, was playing the instrument, and he was surrounded by a number of Turcos, chattering in Arabic to one another, and highly delighted with the comical vagaries of their comrade, as he made the organ give forth such unwonted sounds. A priest was standing by in tears at this desecration; two ladies in black were giving bread to the hungry crowd; the merry-makers every now and then called out to some companions behind the organ for more wind; and while the confusion was at its height, the soldiers in the body of the cathedral threw a number of cartridges into the fire, producing a stifling smoke, such as might not unfitly have been designated the incense of some infernal deity. The *Times* correspondent, who related these circumstances, said that the steps of the altar had been so desecrated that it was impossible to approach them.

The German success at Orleans, and the contemporary withdrawal of the Army of Paris from the great sortie in which it had been engaged, came just in time to prevent a very serious diminution of the war enthusiasm in Germany. A telegram from Berlin, dated December 4th, and published in the *Daily News* of the following day, stated that in well-informed circles in the Prussian capital the military position was deemed critical, and that apprehensions of the final result were entertained. The correspondent of the same journal attached to the army of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg observed at the same period that, owing to losses, exhaustion, and failure of discipline, the Bavarian force was almost expunged, adding:—"The entire road from Janville to Chartres is occupied by Bavarians, who have flung away their guns, wrapped themselves in whatever old garments they could find to protect themselves from the bitter cold, and singly taken up their march afoot to Chartres. The Bavarian corps appears to be completely demoralised. Chartres itself is full of Bavarians who have in this way strolled away from their regiments. The condition of the Bavarian troops [on the 4th] led to the impression, among the French residents of the city and the villages on the road, that the Germans had suffered a great defeat, and it was impossible for them to conceal their joy." It was generally allowed that the Bavarians could not be relied on unless supported by the Prussians. The renewed success of the German armies, however, covered over these defects, and the German people again looked forward hopefully to the end.

General d'Aurelles de Paladines became very unpopular, except in clerical circles, immediately after the fall of Orleans. He was accused of being guided in his military tactics by the opinions or fancies of the bishop of the diocese (Monseigneur Dupanloup), of leaning to Legitimist ideas in government, and of encouraging gross superstitions. One of his relations was a nun; and he appears to have taken a more mystical view of the existing situation than was fitting in a soldier called to a position of command in the face of a singularly active, energetic, and practical enemy. A good many wild stories about miraculous maids, supernatural visions, and inspired prophecies, were at this time floating about France, especially in the neighbourhood of Orleans, which, ever since the days of Joan of Arc, has been supposed to possess a special reputation in this respect. Several of de Paladines' soldiers were Voltairians, and in the eyes of these men the general very seriously compromised himself by going about to the shrines of various saints, and by venerating certain relics in the cathedral, on an altar before which Joan of Arc is reputed to have seen a vision of Mary. For reasons not apparent, Bishop Dupanloup inflicted a penance on him, in consequence of which he remained on his knees for four hours before the altar of some holy celebrity, when his attention was wanted elsewhere. All this may have been very sincere, but it was exceedingly inappropriate to the circumstances by which he was surrounded, and the times in which he lived. A fantastic mixing up of religious enthusiasm with soldiering

was also shown in a singular prayer which one of the correspondents of the *Daily Telegraph* read at Amiens, and which, being contained in a book called "The French Soldier in Germany," seems to have been composed at the commencement of the war, and in anticipation of the rapid subjugation of Prussia. The prayer ended thus:—"And now, O Almighty One, do not forget that France is the land to which all other nations of the globe look for instruction! Do not forget that Frenchmen are your own chosen people; and bless our arms in this just war!" Never before, perhaps, did a diseased national vanity tread so closely upon the heels of blasphemy.

The ultra-Republicans did not vent their emotions after this fashion; but they tried to make a religion out of M. Gambetta. The following proclamation, printed in very large type, was posted on the walls of Châlons-sur-Saône:—

"Our great citizen, Gambetta, in whose breast beats the heart of France, announces to us a great victory. Ducrot, Trochu, and Dorian, at the head of the armies of Paris, have crushed the Prussians. The Army of the Loire, which is directed by a hero, will provide their grave. The French Republic of 1870 will be the child of the nineteenth century. Let us now hearken to the eloquent voice of Him who has not despaired of the salvation of his country.

"THE SUB-PREFECT OF CHÂLONS-SUR-SAÔNE."

The *Gazette de France*, in publishing this document, remarked that the Sub-Prefect had, as far as type was concerned, clothed M. Gambetta with a Divine character. There is little, however, to choose between this indecent exaltation of a fallible human being, and the monstrous conception of Deity favoured by the peasantry in some parts of the country, where it was commonly observed that God *wanted* to be on the side of France, but that the Pope would not let him! Both errors were the results of a radically unhealthy state of mind, which only the modesty of knowledge will remove.

CHAPTER II.

Communications between Count Moltke and General Trochu on the Fall of Orleans—Resolution of the Provisional Government—Changes in the French Military Commands—Removal of d'Aurelles de Paladines—Military Executions—M. Gambetta on the Situation—The King of Prussia on the Situation—Movements of General Chanzy—His Military Position—Fighting near Beaugency on the 7th of December—Renewal of the Battle on the 8th—Further Fighting on the 9th—Progress of the Battle—Fighting on the 10th—The Opposing Armies standing off from one another—The French threatened on their Left Flank—Retreat of their Army—Remission of Fighting on the 11th—Disappearance of the French on the 12th—Mis-statements of M. Gambetta—What the French had really accomplished—Sufferings of the Wounded—State of the Battle-field—Terrible Cold—Condition of the Two Armies—Advance of Prince Louis of Hesse on Blois—The French Surprised at Chambord—Blois attacked by the Germans—Surrender of the City—Sufferings of the Inhabitants—Removal of the Delegate Government from Tours to Bordeaux—Opposition to M. Gambetta, and Conspiracy to depose him—Situation and Character of Bordeaux—Prospects of the Country.

PARIS was not long before it heard that the Army of the Loire, which was to play so important a part in its delivery, was utterly defeated, and that Orleans had once more fallen. The Germans themselves took care to let these facts be known. On the 6th of December the Provisional Government of the capital published a communication which it had received on the previous evening from Versailles. This letter, which was addressed to General Trochu, and signed by Count Moltke, said:—"It may be useful to inform your Excellency that the Army of the Loire was defeated near Orleans yesterday [December 4th], and that that town is re-occupied by the German troops. Should, however, your Excellency deem it expedient to be convinced of the fact through one of your own officers, I will not fail to provide him with a safe-conduct to come and return." The motive of the German commander in making this communication was obviously to produce such a degree of depression in Paris as to persuade the Provisional Government to surrender the city, and the people to acquiesce in that decision. For a long time there had been a great deal of hesitation at Versailles as to bombarding the French capital. That this hesitation proceeded from any feeling of humanity, or regard for the judgment of other countries, it would be idle to suppose; and it is therefore certain that some doubt was felt as to the probabilities of success. The hope of Moltke in sending his despatch was that he might possibly gain all he wanted by a sort of polite intimidation; but in this he was disappointed. On the 6th, General Trochu replied to the message as follows:—"Your Excellency thought it might be useful to inform me that the Army of the Loire

was defeated near Orleans, and that that town was re-occupied by German troops. I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of that communication, which I do not think it expedient to verify through the means which your Excellency suggests to me." With the exception of the customary formal compliments at the close of the two letters, they consisted simply of the sentences here quoted.

In publishing this correspondence, the Provisional Government remarked:—"This news, which reaches us through the enemy, does not, even supposing it to be accurate, deprive us of our right to rely on the great movement of France rushing to our relief. It changes nothing, either in our resolutions or our duties. A single phrase sums them up—'to fight.' Long live France! Long live the Republic!" This summing up of resolutions and duties was not come to without a previous consultation of Ministers, at which, according to a Paris correspondent of the *Indépendance Belge*, some difference of opinion prevailed. M. Picard thought it would be right to embrace such an opportunity for discussing peace, if it could be concluded on honourable terms; and his opinion appeared to make some impression on his colleagues. General Trochu, however, remarked that these overtures proved the critical position of the enemy in the heart of a hostile country, and in the depth of winter; that the German victory might have been less complete than it was represented; that it was necessary to continue the struggle until help should arrive from the provinces; that Paris could hold out for a long time, and that victories might follow reverses. "Fight!" he is said to have exclaimed, in conclusion; "fight again; fight always!" These accounts of Trochu's pugnacity, it should be added, do not at all harmonise with the description of his feelings and personal views which he himself gave to the National Assembly in June, 1871, and are much more in accord with the fiery enthusiasm and passionate hopefulness of M. Gambetta. It is stated by a correspondent of the *Cologne Gazette* that Trochu told the *parlementaire* who brought him news of the defeat of the Army of the Loire that he believed the information. This seems more likely to have been the fact, for we now know that he had a very poor opinion of that army. He treated the messenger hospitably, but declined conversation, and simply replied to an observation touching the capitulation of Paris, that Paris was in the same position after the defeat of d'Aurelles de Paladines as before.

Consequent on that defeat, several changes were made in the French military commands. General de Paladines was relieved of his post, and the Army of the Loire was divided into two. It had, in fact, been scattered by the events of the 3rd and 4th of December into three sections;—the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Corps, under Chanzy, retiring in the direction of Tours, along the north-western bank of the river; the Eighteenth and Twentieth proceeding in a south-easterly direction on the opposite side of the stream; and the Fifteenth retreating through Orleans upon Bourges, also to the south-east. But the Eighteenth and Twentieth Corps, after a ten days' march, succeeded in joining the Fifteenth; and thus two large armies of the Loire were formed, of which the first was placed under Chanzy, and the second under Bourbaki. The command of the Eighteenth Corps was given to General Ballat. General Chanzy was succeeded in the Sixteenth Corps by the former naval officer, Jauréguiberry; while the Seventeenth Corps, whose commander, General Sonis, had been taken prisoner during the late operations on the Loire, was given to General Colomb. Although M. Gambetta at first threatened General de Paladines with a court-martial for losing Orleans, he shortly afterwards offered him the direction of the Camp of Instruction at Cherbourg. The general, however, declined the appointment on the plea of ill-health, but really, it is thought, because he did not choose to accept another post at the hands of a Minister who, though a lawyer and not a soldier, had blamed him for the recent failures. As we have already remarked more than once, de Paladines—who as a rapid and effective organiser of raw levies deserves the highest praise—seems to have been deficient in enterprise and daring; yet his conduct was not without excuse. He knew that a part of his army consisted of troops that were not thoroughly reliable; he doubted their ability to meet the highly-disciplined Germans in the open champaign; and he therefore desired to remain in the shelter of his camp, where he conceived he had a better chance of resisting the enemy. After losing the series of battles in front of Orleans described in the last chapter, he considered that he had no choice but to relinquish the city and retire southward; and he appears to have been haunted by a dread of seeing his whole army surrounded and taken prisoners, as those of MacMahon and Bazaine had been. Still, it is difficult to believe that he could not have done more, had he struck at the right moment and in the right direction.

Military executions, which had been common for some months, became yet more frequent after the opening days of December. A terrible list of these summary judgments appeared day after day in the

Moniteur. It was seldom that an officer was punished; and yet it was commonly alleged that many of the officers quailed before the enemy, and got off whenever they could. Rumour spoke of a general having run away from one of the encounters with Prince Frederick Charles's army; yet the high offenders appeared to be screened, with few exceptions. This was a strange thing to occur under a Republic professing to base itself on the most absolute equality; but experience shows that Republics can be as exclusive as Monarchies. A captain of cavalry, who had been taken prisoner by the Germans, was cashiered in his absence for having failed to join his squadron when it received marching orders on the occasion of the first evacuation of Orleans, and thus purposely allowing himself to fall into captivity. "Soldiers will ask," said an English writer from Tours, "why sentence of death was not recorded against this captain." Had that been done, however, it would have been a mere farce; for the sentence could not have been carried out at the time, the offender being in the hands of the Germans, and, on the conclusion of peace, it would have been hardly possible to shoot him for an act occurring so long before.

About the same time, a notice was issued by M. Gambetta to the generals commanding divisions of the French Army, in which he ordered that in future each of the armies should be provided with a regiment of mounted *gendarmerie*, placed under the exclusive command of the colonel of such regiment, who would communicate directly with the Minister, to whom he would be responsible. A permanent court-martial was to be established in the rear of each army, presided over by the colonel of *gendarmerie*, whose instructions were—"To follow the army, and to dispose his men in such a manner as to watch and close all the issues from it; to arrest fugitives, and to hand them over to a troop in course of formation. They will regard as fugitives every soldier, every officer or group of soldiers, found retreating without a written order, or without being placed under the command of a superior officer. Every soldier, not being wounded, found in the rear of the army without arms or equipment, will immediately be brought before the court-martial. Any one who shall raise a cry of 'Save yourselves,' or of 'We are pursued,' will be taken before the court-martial." There can be no more powerful comment on the state of at least a portion of the French armies at that time than is offered by this memorandum.

M. Gambetta, however, always ready to present the most favourable aspect of the national cause to the public, even when the facts were against him, sent a despatch to the Prefects on the 6th of December, in which he told them to deny boldly the alarmist rumours respecting the condition of the Army of the Loire which were being circulated by ill-disposed persons, with a view to cause discouragement and demoralisation. He added:—"You will be strictly within the bounds of truth in affirming that the army now occupies excellent positions; that its war material is intact, or that the losses therein are repaired; and that it is preparing to resume the struggle with the invader. Let each one be firm and resolved; let us all make together a great and supreme effort, and France will be saved." This exaggerated account of the state of affairs was the only course possible for a popular leader at that time, but its necessity and adoption alike display that peculiar French weakness which has so often been the ruin of the country. On the same day that M. Gambetta issued his despatch to the Prefects, King William published from his head-quarters at Versailles a General Order, which also perhaps placed the position of the invaders in a somewhat more roseate light than circumstances at that time warranted. It said:—

"Soldiers of the Confederate German Armies!—We have again arrived at a crisis of the war. When I last addressed you, the last of the hostile armies which at the commencement of the campaign confronted us had, by the capitulation of Metz, been destroyed. The enemy has since, by extraordinary exertions, opposed to us newly-formed troops, and a large portion of the inhabitants of France have forsaken their peaceful, and by us unhindered, vocations in order to take up arms. The enemy was frequently superior to us in numbers, but you have nevertheless again defeated him; for valour and discipline and confidence in a righteous cause are worth more than numerical preponderance. All attempts of the enemy to break through the investment lines of Paris have been firmly repulsed, often, indeed, with many bloody sacrifices, as at Champigny and at Le Bourget, but with a heroism such as you have everywhere displayed towards him. The armies of the enemy, which were advancing from every direction to the relief of Paris, have all been defeated. Our troops, some of whom only a few weeks ago stood before Metz and Strasburg, have to-day advanced as far as Rouen, Orleans, and Dijon, and, among many smaller victorious engagements, two new important battles—those of Amiens and the several days' fight at Orleans—have been added to our former triumphs. Several fortresses have been conquered, and much war material has been taken. I have reason, therefore, for the greatest satisfaction, and it is to me a gratification and a duty to express this to you. I thank you all, from the general to the common soldier. Should the enemy persist in a further prosecution of the war, I know that you will continue to show that exertion of all your powers to which we owe our great

success hitherto, until we wring from him an honourable peace, worthy of the great sacrifices of blood and life which have been offered up. "WILLIAM."

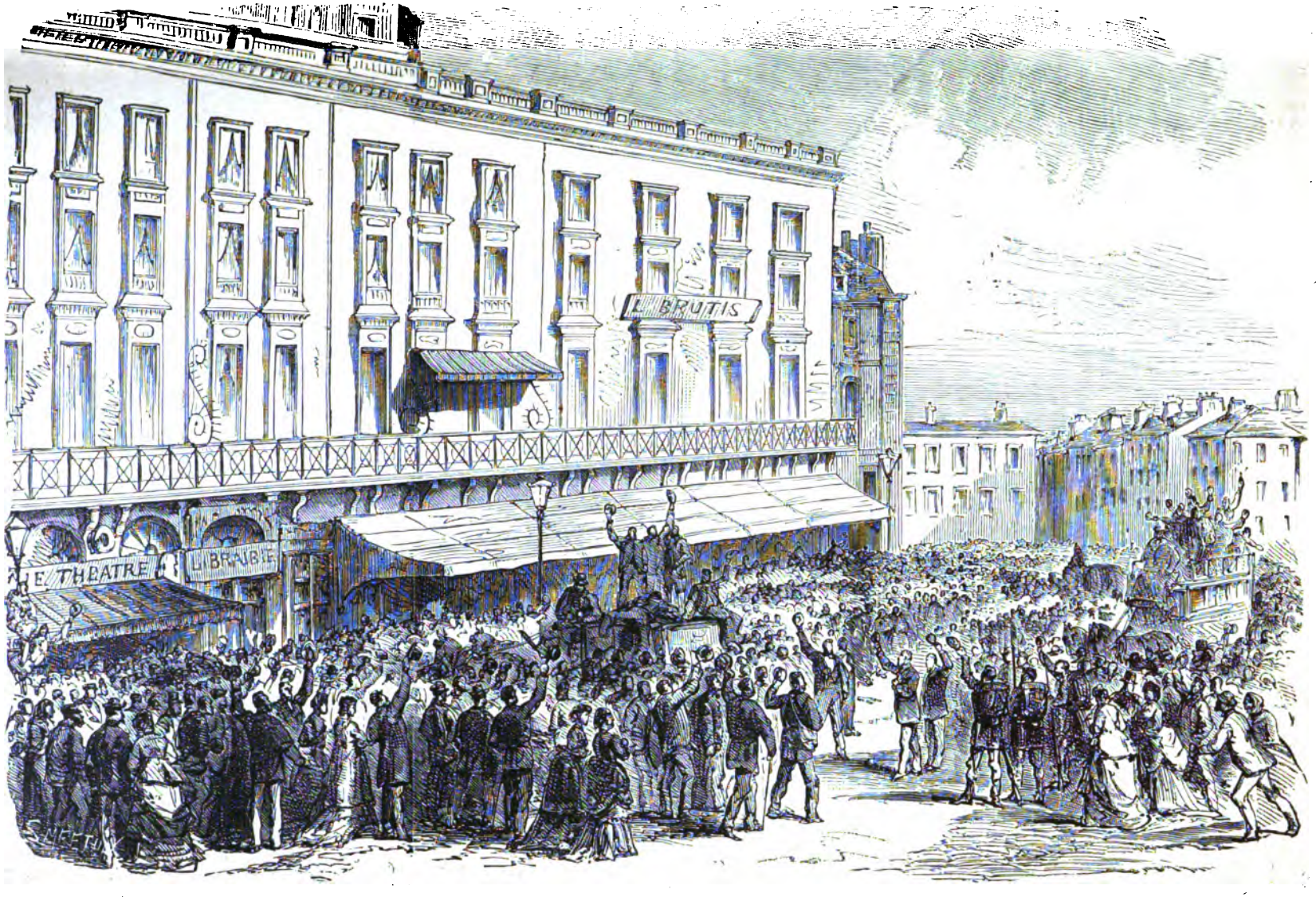
According to some of the German reports, the Army of the Loire was split into small fragments, flying in all directions from the pursuing adversary. It was indeed discomfited and divided; but it still existed in large and far from contemptible bodies, and its fighting powers were not yet exhausted. Chanzy, at the head of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Corps, now entered on a series of operations which, though not actually successful, led to some important results. After the great defeat of the 3rd of December, he continued to fall back, though in good order. For a short time he rested in the vicinity of Blois, not far to the north-east of Tours; but he soon abandoned that post, changed his retrograde into a forward movement, and struck across the country north-westward towards Vendôme. This appears to have been on the 6th of December, on which day a further advance of the Prussians from Orleans towards Tours was commenced. On the 7th, Chanzy was occupying a position between Marchenoir and Beaugency, about twelve miles from Orleans. His army was flanked on the right by a railway running by Orleans and Blois, and on the left by another railway passing through Châteaudun and Vendôme; both lines starting from Paris and converging on Tours. The general character of the country in which the actions of the next few days were to be fought was described in the *Staats Anzeiger*, which wrote:—

"The forest of Marchenoir lies eastward of the town of Marchenoir-les-Plessis, in the department Loir-et-Cher, which latter river receives from the east a small tributary, which entirely surrounds the western border of the forest. The town is an insignificant one, having scarcely seven hundred inhabitants, but showing the remains of a wall, belonging to and forming part of former walls and fortifications, the broad and deep fosses of which are still partly in good condition. The ground between the forest and Beaugency slopes slightly towards the Loire, is cut through northwards by a line of unimportant hills, and is surrounded by the Ceze, which joins the Loire at Chouzy on the north. Cravant, Beaumont, and Messas lie in the Beauce, seven, six, and four kilomètres from Beaugency, and are villages of about 1,000, 1,400, and 200 inhabitants. Bonvalet, Villorceau, and Cernay also lie near Beaugency, mostly north-east of the town, in the department Loiret, east of the department Loir-et-Cher. Vierzon is situate in an extensive plain, with solitary hills, which command the junction of the Yèvre-et-Cher, as also the canal of Berry. The town of Vierzon is one kilomètre from the village of Vierzon. The town has 8,200 inhabitants, the village having 5,000, and is especially important as the meeting-point of the railways to Selles and Tours, Châteauroux and Limoges, Lamotte, Orleans, and Bourges, which last town, with its gun-foundry and other important military institutions, is only twenty-five miles east of Vierzon. Vierzon also carries on boat-building, linen, woollen, silk, and porcelain manufactories, while the village has iron and steel works."



GAMES IN CAMP.

While he was lying in this position, which the intricacies of the forest of Marchenoir rendered unusually strong, Chanzy fought a series of actions with the Germans, which must have convinced the latter that the Army of the Loire, even in its divided state, was still a very dangerous opponent, and that this particular section was being handled by a man of remarkable ability, resolution, and resource. The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg had been despatched by Prince Frederick Charles after the retreating Sixteenth and Seventeenth Corps, which he does not seem to have been aware had



ARRIVAL OF DELEGATES AT BORDEAUX.

by this time again begun to advance. It was probably supposed that but little opposition would be encountered; so that the Duke had under his command only the Seventeenth Division and the remnant of von der Tann's Bavarians. His troops in all numbered about 40,000; the French were probably 50,000 strong. Continuing his advance along the north-western bank of the Loire, the Grand Duke was unexpectedly attacked by the French on the morning of the 7th. The leading columns of his troops were issuing from the village of Meung on to the plain which extends towards Beaugency, when they were received by a hot artillery and rifle fire, which compelled them to fall back until their artillery could come up, when they again advanced. In the contest which ensued, some of the German regiments suffered severely; but ultimately the Würtembergers were reinforced by the Bavarians, who came up from the rear late in the afternoon, and turned the scale against the French, driving them over the undulating plain as far as Beaugency. At that point, however, Chanzy was reinforced, and again attacked the enemy with great vigour. The German army was also augmented by the arrival of the Twenty-second Division; so that the combatants were now more equally matched. When night closed in, the French were in possession of pretty nearly the same ground they had occupied in the morning; but the Germans had not been shaken off. The accounts of the action given by the two sides were, as usual, very contradictory. The German report from Versailles said:—"In marching towards Beaugency, the Seventeenth Division encountered, west of Meung, a fresh corps of the enemy, consisting of from fifteen to seventeen battalions, with about twenty-six guns, and drove them out of all their positions in the course of a sharp fight, in which the First Bavarian Division also successfully took part. The enemy lost 260 prisoners, one cannon, and one mitrailleuse. On the same day, the Sixth Cavalry Division, near Salbris, and the advanced guard of the Third Army Corps, near Nevoy, to the north-west of Gien, overtook and successfully engaged the rearguard of the Loire Army, which was continuing its retreat." On the other hand, General Chanzy, writing on the 7th of December, stated:—"We have been attacked to-day along our whole line, from Meung to St. Laurent-des-Bois. The principal effort of the enemy was against Beaugency. We had to contend against a numerous park of artillery, reckoned at eighty-six guns. The force of the enemy engaged was two Bavarian divisions and one Prussian division, 2,000 cavalry, with considerable forces of the army of Prince Frederick Charles and the Duke of Mecklenburg in their rear. The enemy was driven back as far as Grande Châtre, and we bivouacked in our positions of this morning. Prisoners state that the loss of the enemy from our small-arm fire was considerable, and that our artillery was very effective against that of the enemy. The battle lasted until night. I do not yet know our losses, but I hope they are not important. Our army operated with calmness and order. It is possible that we may be attacked to-morrow. I anticipate that we shall be as successful as to-day. The Bavarian general, Stephen, was wounded before St. Laurent. The enemy has been driven out of Marolles." It thus appears that both sides claimed the advantage; but the probability seems to be that the result was wholly indecisive.

The action was resumed on the morning of the 8th, when the French were posted on a ridge near the village of Favers, below Beaugency. Their position was in form like the half of a horse-shoe, while that of their adversaries represented the other half; but it was a broken horse-shoe, the curved portions of the two halves being separated from one another by a considerable interval. The French once more attacked the Germans, and a fierce and prolonged struggle ensued, ending, like that of the previous day, in no very definite result. The battle raged principally round the village of Messas; but it also extended as far as Cravant. In the afternoon, the French made an attempt to turn the right flank of the Germans; but it failed, and some time afterwards the German artillery began to lap round the French left. At the close of the day, the Germans had gained some ground, and had taken Cravant and Messas; but the French were still in front in great force, and it was evident that they were not yet beaten. During the ensuing night, however, two Hanseatic regiments seized the village of Vernon, where they secured 400 prisoners; and the Bavarians at the same time possessed themselves of La Mée. From the official German account of the events of the 8th, it is evident that, whatever partial reverses the French may have sustained on the 7th, they were still in advance of Beaugency on the following morning. "Yesterday," says a Versailles despatch dated December 9th, "the Duke of Mecklenburg attacked the enemy, who had massed considerable forces near Cravant, Beaumont, and Messas, *before Beaugency*, which places were evacuated by the enemy towards evening, after an obstinate fight. Beaugency was occupied by our troops, who made 1,100 prisoners and captured six guns." Another account from the same source

related that, after the victorious fight of the 7th, the Seventeenth and Twenty-second Divisions, with the Bavarian Corps, continued on the 8th their advance on Beaugency; that the enemy was discovered between Beaugency and the forest of Marchenoir; and that, beside the French forces engaged on the first day, at least two other corps of the Army of the Loire, which had retreated in various directions from Orleans, endeavoured, with all their power, to stop the advance of the German troops. Nevertheless, it was added, the latter kept on gaining ground, and successively captured Cravant, Beaumont, Messas, and at last Beaugency. There can, indeed, be no doubt that the Germans had bettered themselves by the fighting of the 8th and the energetic movements of the ensuing night; yet, as previously remarked, the result was not a definitive success.

The cannonading once more began at daybreak on the 9th, at which period, or a little later, the battle-field, according to the *Times* correspondent with the German army, stood thus:—"To the left, the towers of Beaugency indicated the extreme left of the German position. Upon a rising ground, just outside the town, stood a German battery of the Seventeenth Division, which formed our left wing. Immediately beneath us and close to the village of Vernon, which they had taken during the night, stood a brigade of the same Division, and far beyond to the right front stood the cavalry vedettes, dotted in pairs over the vineyards, and moving to and fro according to some mysterious law by which they regulate their inspection of the enemy's operations. Beyond the first line of these vedettes is the village of Villorceau, conspicuous by the lofty spire of its church, which stands upon an eminence. A rattle of small arms from this quarter proved that a pretty hot fight was going on between the Bavarians, who had just stormed the position, and their enemies, who had retreated to the villages of Villorceau and Villejouan, barely visible from our look-out. Still further to the right, the Twenty-second Division, which had taken the village of Cravant on the previous day, were hotly engaging the left wing of the French, whose extreme batteries were posted in a line with and probably on the road to Marchenoir. It thus appeared that the German front occupied almost the exact front of the French yesterday. The shape of the half-horseshoe was still preserved; but the French half was now occupied by the Germans, who were pushing their enemy back in every direction, though the latter still continued to hold their ground with pertinacity, and to reply furiously to the German batteries." This correspondent states that the fighting on the 8th ended favourably to the French; which is certainly in direct contradiction of the German official accounts. Another point with respect to which the *Times* correspondent and the Duke of Mecklenburg are at issue is as to whether the French assumed the offensive on the morning of the 9th, or only waited to be attacked. The writer in the *Times* says that, owing to the advantages gained by Chanzy's troops on the previous day, it was fully expected they would make a forward movement in the morning. Instead of this, "not only did they not attack, but they allowed themselves to be surprised and driven back in the night, and seemed to take it for granted that the positions they had held with such pertinacity during the day were to be given up without a struggle when the day was over." The Duke, on the contrary, stated in a telegram to his wife:—"The enemy violently attacked us, but was victoriously repulsed by the advance of the Seventeenth and Twenty-Second Divisions. God was with us," he added, emulating the phraseology of the Prussian King. Be the truth as it may, it is certain that soon after daybreak the two armies were hotly engaged, and that the fight was maintained for several hours.

Towards noon, the whole left wing of the Germans, formed by the Seventeenth Division, advanced to storm one of the numerous villages scattered over the plain; and at the same time the Bavarians and the Twenty-second Division, who were lying behind hastily-constructed barricades and natural elevations, replied to a hot fire from the French, similarly protected by interposing objects. At this moment, the hottest part of the action was on the right of the German line. The French evinced a disposition to concentrate in that direction, and it appeared probable that, in the event of their being defeated, they would retire on the forest of Marchenoir, which lay behind them towards their left. The battle, however, was far from over, and the Bavarians, in particular, suffered very much, and were once or twice temporarily borne back. The Bavarian corps left Germany 30,000 strong; it had since been in sixteen battles without reinforcements; and by the second week of December it could not count more than 5,000 effectives. One of the charges brought against the Prussians during the war was that, wherever possible, they put forward the non-Prussian divisions to bear the brunt of the fighting. Whether the charge was just or not, it is undeniable that the Bavarian contingent had a very considerable share in the hard work of the campaign, and that it was almost destroyed by the magnitude of its losses. Reserves, however, were beginning to

arrive from Germany at the period now being described; and the Bavarians, who seem for some time past to have been terribly dispirited by reverses and suffering, again plucked up heart, and fought with great resolution on the 9th of December. The writer in the *Times*, who closely followed the fortunes of the day, thus described the termination of the struggle, which took place as evening set in:—

"The Bavarians began by taking Villorceau, and advanced later in the day to a hamlet beyond. Crossing the field of blood where so many of them lay stark, I found General von der Tann on the road leading to Cravant, and not far from him, on a low hill in rear, the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg and his Staff. It was a position which, in combination with the panorama I had obtained from the church towers of Messas and Villorceau, gave me a perfect idea of the battle. About three o'clock in the afternoon, I heard the order given for a general advance, and in order to see it went to a windmill near the village of Villechamont, which lies between Villorceau and Cravant, and which commands a splendid view of Gosnes and the neighbouring villages, to which the French had, by this time, been driven. As the artillery went to the front, and the sharpshooters began to feel the enemy along the whole line, the firing became something terrific. The rifles seemed almost to try and rival the mitrailleuse in the loudness and rapidity of the fire, and the angry combination of the two, added to the bursting of the shells and the fire of the big guns, made four distinct sounds, which, between four and five in the afternoon, blended in a roar louder than anything I had ever heard before. At this moment, from the top of the windmill, I could plainly see, immediately under the blaze of the setting sun, long lines of French troops apparently retreating rapidly, and this time the day seemed fairly won. Yesterday it may have been considered a drawn game; but there could be no doubt who were the victors this evening; and the shade of anxiety which clouded all countenances last night and this morning, at the unexpected check which the German armies received, has now given place to a more relieved and satisfied expression. Still, the French are spoken of in far higher terms than they have been since the commencement of the war."

Another writer in the same journal said that "around Villorceau the dead Bavarians and French lay thicker than pheasants lie after the hottest *battue* in England. On each side of a little wave of ground they lay face to face, with only a few yards between them. On the crest a Bavarian had fallen dead on a dead Frenchman. During the day, Beaugency was patrolled by Prussian troops, and all the houses in the suburbs, and the tobacconists' and confectioners' shops, were plundered. The butt-end blows on the doors and shutters alarmed the inhabitants almost as much as the firing. The Brandenburg troops seemed most systematic in their proceedings, and quietly broke open houses in the market-place in presence of their officers." General Chanzy, in reporting the events of this day, said that the German forces consisted of two divisions of Bavarians, one division of Prussians (he seems to have meant the Mecklenburgers), 2,000 cavalry, and strong reserves; that three French corps were engaged; that his own army slept at night on the positions they had occupied in the morning; and that the prisoners taken acknowledged that the Germans had suffered heavy losses.

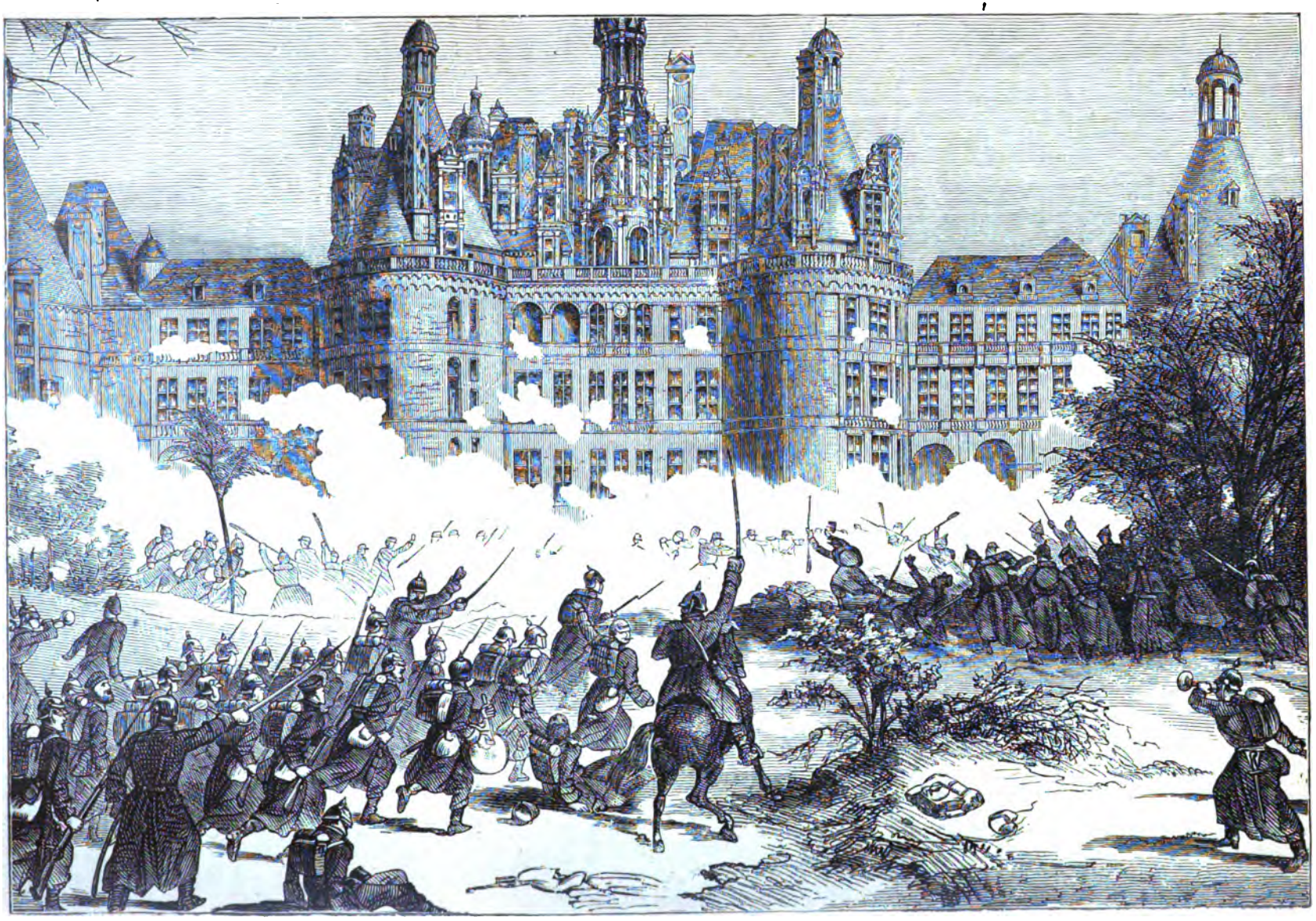
The anticipation, formed on the 9th, that the French, on being driven back, would retreat into the forest of Marchenoir, was not immediately realised. A despatch from the Royal headquarters at Versailles says that after the fighting of the previous days the German troops were to have been allowed to repose on the 10th; but that in the morning the enemy again attempted to assume the offensive. During the night, the French had received large reinforcements from Blois, consisting of Pallières' Fifteenth Corps and the newly-organised Twenty-first Corps; and they now flung themselves in great strength against the Twenty-second Division of the Germans, which was holding Cernay and Cravant. For a couple of hours those villages were furiously bombarded; but the Germans then brought their artillery into position, and the engagement became general along the whole line, which extended from Villorceau to L'Hay, a little to the east of Cravant. The French were now spreading to the right of the German army, apparently, says the *Times* correspondent, with a view to getting between the enemy and his base of operations at Orleans. To baffle this design, if it was really entertained, the Bavarians were pushed forward on the extreme right, supported by the whole of the Tenth Corps, which had just arrived from Orleans, and was therefore in good condition. The Grand Duke's artillery took up a position on a ridge extending eastward from Cravant, which presently became the centre of the German line. The French right rested on Gosnes, and their left on Villermain and Montigny. The Germans were thrown out in skirmishing order, and their adversaries advanced every now and then from their barricades and other covers, came within long rifle-range, and rapidly fired. According to a French report, Chanzy's army took 400 prisoners during the day, and re-captured the village of Origny; but the correspondent already quoted says that the distinguishing feature of the fight on both sides seemed to be caution. There were few brilliant

dashes, and even the artillery fire, in the opinion of this authority, languished. Yet he goes on to relate that the guns kept incessantly puffing off jets of smoke, and the shells came whizzing through the air, though but little damage was done. The Versailles account also said that the action was principally carried on with artillery, but that the German loss was very slight. The Grand Duke himself stated that there was a prolonged cannonade, and that in the afternoon the enemy made a demonstration with heavy forces against the German right, but was repulsed by artillery and cavalry. Both sides had in truth experienced each other's powers so sharply on the earlier days that they were well disposed to avoid close quarters as far as possible, and to rely more on manœuvring. Towards evening, the French, perceiving that their opponents were being heavily massed on their left, gave up their apparent project of outflanking the Germans in that direction, and, seeing a strong probability, if they lingered, of suffering a like fate themselves, began to withdraw, though very quietly and deliberately. Gradually both wings retired, and the whole force was concentrated between Villermain and Gosnes, with the large forest of Marchenoir in their rear. As the Germans advanced, they found that the villages which were lately occupied by the French had been vacated by them; and it was evident that the policy of Chanzy was now to retreat to some more secure position, seeing that he could not force the lines of the Duke of Mecklenburg.

During the fighting on the 10th, some companies of the 76th Regiment of Germans performed a very gallant exploit at Villejouan. In their attack on that village, for the purpose of rescuing some of their comrades who had been seized, they found themselves, after driving out the French, without ammunition. Some of the French soldiers had by this time been made prisoners, and their chassepôts and ammunition were now used by the Germans against the enemy still in front. An ammunition-wagon on its way to the relief of the Germans was brought to a standstill by the horses being shot; on which, a party ran out of the village under a heavy fire, dragged in the wagon, and finally repulsed the French. All the superior officers were killed during this encounter, and the command of the battalion devolved on the captain, who was afterwards personally thanked by the Grand Duke.

The 11th was a day of rest, not merely in the ordinary sense (for it was Sunday), but in a military sense, for, with the exception of a few dropping shots at long intervals, nothing was done until late in the evening, when the advanced guard of the Tenth Corps, learning that the village of Villermain was evacuated, followed on the footsteps of the enemy, and had an engagement of no great importance with his rear-guard. On the 12th it was discovered that the French had entirely disappeared during the night, and the Mecklenburgers and Bavarians set out, marching by cross-roads, on the track of the fugitives. The Bavarian corps of von der Tann was on the same day sent back to Orleans, to garrison that city, and to enjoy a period of much-needed and well-merited repose.

The French troops under Chanzy had given unmistakable proof that they were animated by valour and persistence, and their commander had shown that he was the most capable general now in the service of France; yet it was none the less true that the army had been forced to retreat. M. Gambetta, however, was full of the utmost enthusiasm, and led the public to suppose that all was going successfully. Dating from "the head-quarters of General Chanzy, December 10th," he telegraphed to his colleagues of the Delegate Government:—"I have found everything here perfectly maintained, owing to the firmness and indomitable energy of General Chanzy. He has not only maintained his position for the last three days, but repulsed the masses of Prince Frederick Charles, inflicting the severest losses on them. Fighting has been carried on since the 28th ult., and the veracity of General Moltke's assertion that the Army of the Loire is annihilated may be appreciated at its proper value, when it is seen that one-half of this army, which has alone up to the present been engaged, is sufficient to hold in check the veteran troops of Prince Frederick Charles." On the following day, the War Minister sent a despatch from Tours to Bordeaux (where the Delegation had now established itself), saying:—"I have returned here, having left General Chanzy yesterday afternoon. His efforts up to the present have been crowned with success; he is protecting the line of the Loire, without ceding an inch of ground I think the position of things is sufficiently satisfactory to allow of my leaving, and I am now on my way to Bourges, to see what can be obtained from the Second Army." These were among the most egregious of M. Gambetta's mis-statements; for it is scarcely possible that on the 11th he should have been unaware that Chanzy, so far from "protecting the line of Loire, without ceding an inch of ground," had been gradually, though slowly and with difficulty, pushed back for some days, and that he was now preparing to retreat. It was a pity that M. Gambetta did not content himself with pointing to the fact, of which he had every right to be proud, that the left wing of the Army of the



FIGHTING AT THE CASTLE OF CHAMBORD.

Loire had held in check the seasoned veterans of Prince Frederick Charles, and inspired them with respect, not unmingled with apprehension. On this head, the *Times* correspondent with the German army, writing after the encounter of December 10th, remarked :—

"The fighting of the last four days has probably encouraged the French rather than otherwise, for they have been so long strangers to victory that not to suffer defeat is to give them renewed hopes. They have now been fighting eight days out of ten, and raw troops who can do this against veteran soldiers, and not be beaten on the tenth, may fairly hope that the tide is beginning to turn in their favour. The Germans, on the other hand, are beginning to be puzzled at this unwonted pertinacity. They have been so long accustomed to astounding successes, that to be held in check for four days by the much-despised Army of the Loire, and to be obliged to send for reinforcements, is quite a new experience. There was a rumour current this morning that Paris had capitulated, and it was curious to listen to the earnest desires expressed, both by French and Germans, in almost the same words, that it might be true, and that a war of which both sides are thoroughly weary may be drawing to a close. Towards the afternoon, the firing got so very sluggish that there seemed nothing more to wait for. The fierce attack of the French, in the early part of the day, had evidently been a *ruse*, either to cover their change of front or for some other purpose ; for they seemed disposed to lapse into quiescence after they had been replied to for a while, and the German army was too much in need of rest to court a struggle."

The same writer observed that there was something awful in getting up every morning, and going to a battle as regularly and calmly as if it were partridge-shooting. It was terrible to camp every night among frozen bodies, with comparatively nothing to eat, and to rise to new deeds of violence. One night this gentleman saw a man brought in perfectly unconscious, after having lain a day and two nights on the battle-field with a fractured thigh. The blood which clotted his wound and clothes was frozen into solid ice ; yet the poor man was restored. The dead were scattered thinly over the vast plain ; and an explorer, not being familiar with the locality, found his way from time to time by the landmarks of stiffened corpses which had not yet been removed. "Day after day," continued the writer, "to pass the same ditch, and see the same contorted features and glassy eyes which thrilled one with horror the first time, still staring at one—to try new roads in order to avoid the ghastly sights of the old ones, but to obtain fresh evidences of the great area over which the fight has been extended, and, after passing across the battle-fields of three successive days, to find on the fourth a new battle going on at the point where the last one left off—all this is calculated to produce a sense of distress difficult to describe." Each day's fight led



VILLAGE NEAR BLOIS AFTER THE SIEGE.

to the burning of houses, and peasants and their families were seen wandering disconsolately among the ruins of their homes. The work of burying the dead was rendered all the more difficult by the ground being frozen hard, and the men on both sides were so fatigued that they were hardly able to perform the requisite labour. In all the villages, the larger houses were turned into lazarettes, and were full to overflowing; and the surgeons were utterly exhausted by the incessant demands on their care and skill. The unwounded men and horses were obliged to pass the nights round their camp-fires, with the thermometer at 10 and 12 degrees of frost, and with a great scarcity in the supplies. The French army was said to suffer much from inefficient commissariat. On the 11th, the Germans, availing themselves of the pause in active operations, endeavoured to make things as comfortable as circumstances would permit. Great fires were kindled out of vineyard stakes, and the men, camping in sheltered hollows, tried to pass away the time with songs and soldiers' mirth. Such was the scarcity of boots among these regiments that those found on the bodies of the slain were appropriated by the living.

While these actions were going on at the front, Prince Louis of Hesse was sent by Prince Frederick Charles to turn the position of Chanzy by advancing along the south-eastern bank of the Loire, crossing at Blois, and occupying that town. By referring to a map, it will be seen that Blois lies between Orleans, to the north-east, and Tours, to the south-west, and that all three towns are seated on the river to which it is necessary to make such frequent allusion in relating the great events connected with the endeavours of de Paladines and Chanzy to relieve Paris. Blois is also south of the country in which Chanzy was now operating, and its possession by the Germans was important to them, because the communication of Chanzy with the Delegate Government, whether at Tours or Bordeaux, would thus be severed. The French forces opposite Blois, on the south-eastern side of the river, were engaged with the Ninth German corps during the 9th of December, and were repulsed at Montlivauld and Chambord. At the latter place (which is about nine miles north-east of Blois) they were taken by surprise, and the seizure of Chambord completely uncovered Blois. It was evening. The French general in command (General Morandy) was asleep in his carriage; the troops had piled their arms and baggage, and, without having posted any sentinels, had begun preparing refreshment. Suddenly the Bavarians burst upon them with a murderous fire, and they fled in confusion, leaving arms, ammunition, baggage, and a large number of prisoners, in the hands of the enemy. Immediately before the Bavarians appeared in sight, a Mobile, who was one of a number of captives they were driving before them as a sort of screen, called out that "the German devils" were behind; but he paid for his patriotism with his life. The bulk of the French forces continued the fight on the morning of December 10th; but the Germans speedily advanced to Vienne, a suburb of Blois, on the opposite side of the Loire, and the French then began to cross the bridge, which, as soon as they had all got over, was blown up, much to the grief of the townspeople, who protested against the destruction, and seemed to value their bridge (which was one of great beauty) more than the safety of the army. Having reached the city, the French forces marched northwards, leaving the citizens to deal with the Germans on the opposite bank as best they could. General Manstein planted cannon in the most advantageous positions he could find, and began to shell the town. The cathedral and the barracks were a good deal damaged in this way, and the people soon desired that the place might be surrendered. The Mayor, yielding to this wish, had actually held up the white flag, when M. Gambetta arrived in hot haste from Chanzy's head-quarters, and immediately prohibited the capitulation. The Prussians, seeing that nothing prevented their entry into Blois but the gap in the bridge, sent word to the Mayor that they would give him twenty minutes to make the way passable, but that they insisted on its being done. The open space was only about thirty feet wide, and there was plenty of timber available for the temporary spanning of the chasm. The War Minister, however, strictly forbade any such proceeding, and the guns of the town fired on the enemy. The Germans replied, and after a time negotiations were opened. A large sum of money was demanded by the attacking force, on pain of a bombardment. This was refused, and the women, children, and old men of the city trooped out into the forest, while others retired into the cellars, where they hid their valuables. Night passed without the Germans opening fire, though they declined to listen to the Bishop, who sought to mediate. On the following day (Sunday, the 11th), further negotiations were opened, but without effect; and on the 12th a portion of the hostile army withdrew. Blois, however, was not long allowed to remain in fancied security; for on the 13th the Tenth German Corps reached the city from the north, and, the enemy being now on both sides, further resistance became impossible,

A bridge of boats was thrown over the river, for the passage across of the Ninth Corps, and the town was entered by the Germans, who found there a large amount of provisions, together with several hundred stragglers from the Second Army of the Loire.

A Frenchman who was in Blois during the 10th, gave an account of the incidents of the day in a letter to a friend, from which it appeared that the Germans kept firing on the town for several hours. "At two o'clock," he continued, "the firing became much nearer, and from my windows I could see the Prussians, who had been firing a few shells on the outskirts. I went off to the ambulance at the Château de Blois. I sat there until four o'clock; the bullets came whistling in at the château windows, courts, and passages, and then shells were thrown, and poor wounded and dying were brought in from the streets to the ambulance. This went on until five o'clock without interruption. Then from the windows we saw all the villages round Blois on fire; it was diabolical and horrible—all the different châteaux round Blois in a blaze. Then came a calm, and we all hoped it was finished, and that the town had surrendered; but Gambetta, for our ill-luck, was there, and he asked for an hour's respite, only for women and children to leave the place, as he refused to surrender, and meant to hold out until nothing was left, hoping by so doing to protect the army near Beaugency. Then a messenger came to us from the general, to say that in three-quarters of an hour the bombardment would recommence; and we went off to the station at once, without even going home, as our house must have been done for long before, after that hour's bombardment. Fearing to lose a chance of getting away at the station, we got into a goods train and sat on the floor, and got to Tours, where we found not a bed to be had, or even sitting-room at the station, and had to wait until Sunday, the 11th, to get away. I am wretched when I think of all the misery at Blois, and all I left behind me, as I have nothing left; but I should equally have lost all had I remained." Blois is the capital of the department of the Loir-et-Cher, and is situated about thirty-six miles from both Orleans and Tours. Being built on the side and summit of a hill, it is divided into an upper and a lower town; and at the top is an ancient castle, now used as barracks. It is a town of great antiquity; and an aqueduct which brings water to the houses is by some supposed to be of Roman workmanship, though by many this is considered doubtful.

The inability of Chanzy to maintain his ground in the country about Beaugency, and the steady advance of the Germans towards Tours, rendered the position of the Delegate Government at the latter place exceedingly perilous. It was therefore determined to hold everything in readiness for a rapid transfer of the several offices to Bordeaux, should the progress of events render such a course increasingly advisable. Although the Government announced on the 9th of December that the removal would take place on the following day, with a view "to ensure perfect liberty of movement for the troops in the field" (notwithstanding that there was "no cause for anxiety"), and although the Ministers did in fact depart on the 10th, together with the representatives of foreign Powers, M. Gambetta was afterwards highly displeased with General Sol, who was in command of the Tours Military Division, for evacuating the city. For this offence the general was removed from active service; and at the same time General Morandy was cashiered for his manifest incapacity at Chambord. There was certainly abundant reason for severity in the latter case; but in the former the justification is not so clear. General Sol, with no great forces at his command, found himself threatened by the Germans, who were within two days' march of Tours, and had possession of two lines of rail converging on the city—the one from Orleans, the other from Châteaudun; and it is therefore not surprising that, when the Government itself thought it prudent to retire, he should have doubted the expediency of remaining. Both generals, however, were of Imperial appointing; and that fact may have had something to do with the manner in which they were treated, although in one instance the judgment had been really merited.

The dictatorial ways of M. Gambetta provoked not a little opposition in some quarters. A few days before the removal of the Delegation, the journal called *La France* made a trenchant attack on the War Minister, observing that personal power could only be justified by success, and recalling the fact that under his rule France had lost Metz, Schelestadt, Neu Breisach, Thionville, and La Fère, and had seen the Prussians occupy Amiens, Rouen, and Orleans, invest Belfort, threaten Lyons and Besançon, and nearly double the diameter of the circle of occupation. The *France* therefore considered that M. Gambetta ought by this time to distrust his own ability, and to surround himself by a Council of Government It is but justice to the energetic and capable Minister of War to say that the disasters to which the *France* alluded could not fairly be charged on Gambetta, and that, considering the frightful collapse of the country

after the capitulation of Sedan, he actually did wonders in the way of raising fresh armies, and inspiring the minds of Frenchmen with the passionate enthusiasm and faith in victory which belonged to his own. Yet failure will always be visited on the heads of administrators, however little it may really be chargeable on their management of affairs. Office-seekers will take advantage of the popular discontent to grasp at power for themselves; and this was now the case with the opponents of M. Gambetta. A newspaper correspondent, writing from Tours on December 9th, said :—

"A great many ex-deputies here—MM. Cochéry, Lefèbvre, Guizot, Montpeyroux, Wilson, Houssard, de Civrac, de Barante, Alfred Le Roux, Roy, de Louly, &c. —have been laying their heads together against Gambetta. A deputation of them recently went in a body to the *Constitutionnel* office, where they proclaimed that the continuation of the war was all nonsense; that France had nothing to do but to make peace on the best terms that the enemy would give her; that Gambetta ought to be dethroned from his dictatorship, and a Constituent Assembly at once elected. They wished the *Constitutionnel* to publish a manifesto, which they brought ready cut and dried. Although the *Constitutionnel* is a journal still conducted by the old Imperialist staff, and is very hostile to the Republic, the editor who received this deputation refused to have anything to do with the manifesto, and told the deputation that if they wished to protest against M. Gambetta they must do it their own way. Thus foiled in one mode of assault, they tried another, and carried their bill of indictment to the Prefecture, where one of M. Gambetta's secretaries, out of courtesy to them as ex-deputies, requested them to come at two in the afternoon for an answer. When they called again, they were simply told that M. Gambetta had nothing whatever to say to them."

These ex-deputies even plotted a *coup d'état*. Gambetta was to be deposed, and a new Government formed. The Minister, however, heard of the conspiracy, and sent word to the conspirators that he had his eye on them, and that if they did not give up their treasonable machinations they would be arrested and imprisoned. This appears to have struck terror into the plotters, and nothing more was heard of the scheme.

Bordeaux, where the Delegate Government had now fixed its quarters, is built on the left bank of the Garonne, in the department of the Gironde. Its distance south-south-west from Paris is 360 miles by the railway route through Orleans, Tours, Poitiers, and Angoulême. The city extends in the shape of a crescent about four miles along the river, which at that point turns with a rapid sweep from north-west to north-east. On the other side of the Garonne is a suburb called La Bastide, united to the main body of the town by a very handsome bridge of seventeen arches. The river bank has been converted into a line of quays, more than three miles in length. Below the bridge, the river widens to a breadth of eight hundred yards, forming a large harbour capable of containing twelve hundred ships, and with a great depth of water at high tides. Vessels of six hundred tons can load and unload at all times close to the quays; and, owing to these advantages, and to the fact that the Garonne runs into the estuary of the Gironde, the junction of which with the Bay of Biscay is not more than seventy miles distant, the city has acquired great celebrity and prosperity as a seat of commerce. It is also famous for the beauty of its Gothic cathedral, which was built by our countrymen during their occupation of Guienne in the Middle Ages. The church of St. Michael was likewise built by the English; and the town is closely connected with the former history of this country.

By removing so far south as Bordeaux, the Delegate Government placed themselves at a safe distance from the invaders, and acquired a species of provincial metropolis not unworthy of the grandeur and of the traditions of France, and capable of affording a secure seat for deliberation on the prospects of the country. The period at which the change was made from Tours to Bordeaux was a very important era in the progress of the war. Although the state of affairs was not so favourable to France as M. Gambetta alleged, it was nevertheless true that a gleam of hope was beginning to irradiate the depressing obscurity in which the fortunes of the Republic had languished ever since its birth. France once more had armies that were worthy of the name. The composition of those armies, no doubt, varied considerably in the different divisions. There were fighting bodies, and others that were better disposed to run away. Some of the corps consisted of highly-disciplined troops, while in many the sense of military subjection and cohesion was sadly deficient. Yet, on the whole, France in arms was making itself felt by the Germans in no slight or insignificant degree. The great sortie from Paris had seriously threatened the investment of the capital; the battles which Chanzy had maintained for so many days in the neighbourhood of Beaugency had shown that the relief of Paris by the efforts of the provinces was not an utterly hopeless task. Chanzy and his troops had now escaped to the west, and the Germans were almost avowedly uneasy at the vague and perilous foreshadowings of the hour.

CHAPTER III.

The Pursuit of General Chanzy—The French encountered by the Germans at Fréteval—Actions of December 14th and 15th—Serious Position of the Germans—Attack on Vendôme, and Abandonment of that Town by the French—Chanzy's Position turned on the Right—His Retreat on Le Mans—Character of his Army—Proclamation of General Faidherbe to the French Army of the North—Occupation of Rouen by the Germans—French Accounts of the Fall of Rouen—Disturbances in the City—Prussian Severities—Preparations at Havre against Prussian Attack—Grandiloquent Proclamation of the Sub-Prefect—Approach of the Prussians—Seizure of Dieppe—Proceedings of the Invaders in that Town—Slight Encounters—The Defences of Havre—The Prussians retiring—Extravagant Hopes of the French—Forged Despatches—Change in the German Manœuvres—French Success at Ham—Capitulation of Phalsburg and Montmédy.

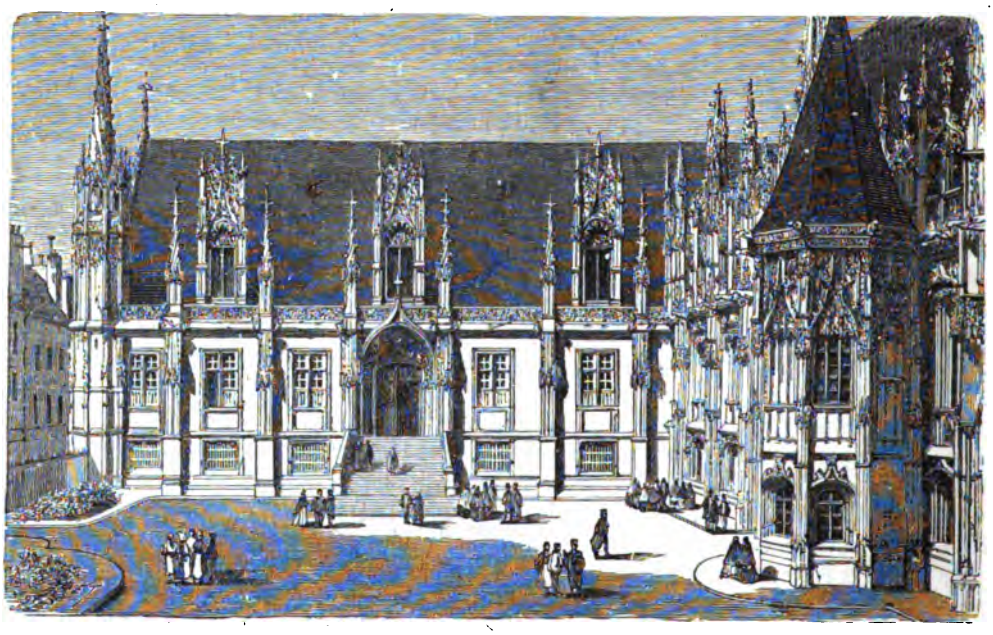
WHEN it was discovered on the morning of December 12th that General Chanzy and his army had slipped away unobserved, great was the feeling of mystification in the camp of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg. Every one had anticipated a renewal of the battle that day; but the French position was abandoned, and not a French soldier was to be seen. The army which had maintained so gallant a fight for the last five days had retreated to the north-west, and the German forces at once started in pursuit. The *Times* correspondent, who, while still at Cravant, heard at a distance the sound of cannonading, and thence divined that a certain amount of rear-guard fighting was going on, followed in the track of the Germans, and soon came upon a vast, undulating space of country, like the steppes of Southern Russia, where the villages were thinly distributed. The frost of the previous days had disappeared; rain was heavily falling; a dense mist wrapped the country in gloom; and the roads were thick with mud and slush. Everywhere, traces of the French, in the shape of camping-grounds and temporary barricades, were visible; and the usual signs of devastation, now so common in many parts of France, were not wanting. The singular turn which events had taken was well described by the representative of the *Times* when he said (writing on December 14th):—"Great is the mystery of war. We left Orleans to go to Tours, and we seem to be on the straight road to Paris. On the 9th of last month, the small Bavarian force, under the command of General von der Tann, after making a gallant stand at Coulmiers, was obliged to retreat before the French army of the Loire. Five weeks afterwards, after marching incessantly and fighting eight battles, we find ourselves in sight of the wood behind which the battle of the 9th was fought, with the self-same army before us in a stronger position than it has ever been in before." Chanzy had got on to the direct road to Paris, and had so placed himself that he could receive reinforcements from the west. The army, however, suffered severely in its retreat. After a while, the road was found to be cumbered with broken-down wagons, cast-away chassepôts, and knapsacks partially emptied of their contents. A long file of prisoners was also met, tramping wearily through the mire. The men—who belonged to the regular army—were taken in Oucques and the neighbourhood without a battle. It was said that these soldiers actually lagged behind the main body in order that they might be captured, because, as they alleged, their shoes got full of mud. Many openly declined to fight in such weather, on any terms. The people of Oucques vowed they should not be taken prisoners in their houses, and so drove them out into the streets, where they patiently waited until the Germans arrived.

The Grand Duke encountered the retreating French on the 14th. The latter had taken up a position of great strength on some high ground in the vicinity of the small town of Fréteval. The country about here is rugged, and is traversed by the Loire, running north-east, and by another and smaller river, with a name nearly identical—the Loir—which is almost parallel with the more important stream. The towns of Châteaudun and Vendôme stand on the Loir; and about midway between these towns the river passes through a range of hills, in a narrow valley of which lies Fréteval. The great forest of Marchenoir extends for a distance of at least twenty miles eastward from the Loir, while on the opposite bank the forest of Fréteval spreads westward over an equal breadth of country. The French position was on the western bank of the river, with the wood of Fréteval on the left and in the rear, the wood of Marchenoir on the right, and the river Loir (which at that point makes a bend) in front. Both armies occupied the sides of hills, and fired at each other across the valley. The action began a little after one o'clock P.M., when a German lieutenant who had entered Fréteval at the head of a party of Dragoons, and was told by some prisoners that the place was abandoned, was suddenly fired upon

from all sides, and compelled to retreat. The fighting shortly afterwards became general, and in the course of the day two companies of a German regiment took Fréteval at the point of the bayonet, but could not hold it, on account of its exposed position. The coming on of night, as usual, put an end to the contest, and at that time no absolute advantage had been gained by either side.* On the following day (December 15th) the fighting was resumed, but again without any decisive result. The German commander began to feel uneasy. Instead of driving the army of the Loire farther away from Paris, which was what he was charged and expected to do, he had been unable, with all his energy and all the hard fighting of his troops, to prevent that army from placing itself on the road to Paris, which was now quite open up to the investing lines. Chanzy's forces had proved that they could fight with courage and pertinacity; they were much more numerous than those of the Grand Duke; they had contrived to double on their pursuers, and completely to reverse the first relative positions; the Germans were in the rear, and incapable of outflanking their enemy; the French were in communication with Le Mans and the west, and it seemed to be their intention to march to the relief of Paris by way of Châteaudun. Their present position was too strong to be stormed, and there appeared to be no alternative for the Germans but warily to track the ever-receding foe.

Times Correspondent with the German Army of the Loire.

The situation, however, was suddenly changed by the success of the Germans at Vendôme, a town, a little to the south of Fréteval, on the same side of the river (the western side), and forming part of the French line. After the fall of Blois on December 13th, the Tenth Corps of Prince Frederick Charles's army marched towards the north-west, and at Vendôme found the French drawn up in force before the town, under cover of four batteries posted on the heights crowned by the old castle, which forms the most conspicuous feature of the place. This was on December 16th, about the middle of the day. Chanzy himself and Admiral Jauréguiberry were both in the town at the time, and it seemed probable that an energetic defence would be offered. General Voigts Rhetz, who commanded the German division, was anxious to spare his men as much as possible, and therefore gave orders that the fighting was to be chiefly with the artillery. From three to half-past four the guns thundered loudly; but the effect of the German fire was diminished by the muddy and clayey soil, which prevented the percussion-shells from exploding. Some of the French guns, however, were dismounted, and one of the ammunition wagons blew up, inflicting serious losses on the troops near at hand. The mitrailleuses were worked with great activity, but without much effect, owing to the attacking force keeping to a great extent under cover. At five o'clock in the evening, the French retreated close under the guns



PALAIS DE JUSTICE, ROUEN.



THE EVACUATION OF ORLEANS.

on the castle heights, and, as it was now dark, the firing ceased. The French officers expressed the utmost confidence as to the result on the following day (December 17th); but during the night the Prussian troops made a movement with a view to surrounding the town as soon as returning light should enable them to resume the attack. When the morning revealed these preparations, the French were seized with a panic, and it was resolved to blow up the bridge over the Loir. This was speedily, though not very effectually, done; and the explosion was so violent that the fine old painted windows in one of the ancient churches of the town, near the bridge, were broken, and the sculpture of the vaulted arches was loosened. The French then retreated, and the Germans immediately afterwards entered the town, the bridge not having been greatly damaged. At eleven o'clock a Prussian battery was brought into position on the heights, and fire was opened on the retreating columns of the French. In half an hour the fire ceased, and several prisoners and guns were brought in.* This successful action had a great effect on the subsequent progress of the campaign. The French line was turned on the right flank. Chanzy was in a relatively weaker position towards his opponent than he had been before, and he continued his retreat, moving towards the west. The German line now extended from Cloyes and Morée in the north, through Vendôme, to Blois in the south-east. The first two places were occupied by the Duke of Mecklenburg's division; Vendôme, as we have seen, was held by the Tenth Corps; and at Blois the Ninth Corps was stationed.

The writer in the *Times* attached to the army of the Grand Duke gave an account, from personal observation, of the ground on which the action of Fréteval was fought. He wrote:—

"Descending into the town of Fréteval, I had an opportunity of judging better than had been possible before of the strength of the position held by the French. They had blown up the bridge which here crosses the river, and loopholed the houses of the village, which, however, was too much exposed to the shells of both sides to be of much use to either. Beyond was a strip of plain, and then rose the steep hills with narrow zig-zag roads, stiff hedges, dense copses, deep gullies, and everything that could shelter an enemy and make an attack by storm impossible. Our side was no less unassailable. A narrow gorge descended into the valley, and down it, with steep sharp turns, wound the road; flights of steps afforded short cuts for foot passengers, and led through vineyards and woods, and along deep water cuttings. Picturesquely perched upon the precipitous face of the cliff, and running partly down it where it was not too steep, were the low ruined walls of what was once an extensive castle, of which the tower alone remains, and through loopholes fashioned for musketry many hundred years ago did our riflemen poke their needle-guns, and use the defences—but with a very different weapon—for the purpose for which they were originally designed. It was strange to think that in the old feudal times matchlock-men may have stood behind those same loopholes, and strewed the terraces before them with dead like their more enlightened posterity, although, owing to their less civilised condition, it was impossible to kill at such long distances, or so many men at a time. I was glad to see so very few dead bodies on this occasion; and I am in hopes that the two days' fighting at Fréteval has not been attended with heavy loss."

After the capture of Vendôme, the French had no alternative but to retreat on Le Mans or on Paris. They chose the former direction, as being the less perilous of the two, and enabling them to form a junction with such forces as might be found in the western departments. On the 17th of December, Chanzy fought another rear-guard action with the Germans. His antagonist on this occasion was once more von der Tann, and the scene of the encounter was at Epuisay, where the roads from Vendôme and Morée to St. Calais unite. The battle ended in Chanzy again withdrawing, and on the 21st he entered Le Mans. Commenting on this extraordinary retreat of an army greatly outnumbering its opponent, ably commanded, and on two or three occasions favoured with admirable positions, the *Times* correspondent said that to account for such facts he was driven to a conclusion which the French peasantry had reached long before—viz., that the French soldier would not fight. "When," added this writer, "by some desperate manœuvre on the part of his general he finds himself suddenly brought to bay with the enemy, he fights well during that day; but he seems positively to insist upon retiring the next morning, and he takes advantage of the first opportunity afterwards to deliver himself up to the enemy. Thus you may see a couple of Uhlans riding along with twenty or thirty French soldiers following them like a drove of sheep. There is not the slightest fear of their running away. The poor Uhlans could not get rid of them if they wished. In their morning ride they find themselves suddenly and affectionately surrounded by these Frenchmen, who cling to them for protection against the generals who make them fight, and ask for no better fate than to be sent to Germany." It should be recol-

* Correspondent of the *Morning Post*. We have followed the dates given by this writer, who was on the spot, and wrote shortly after the events; but some accounts say that the French evacuated Vendôme on the evening of the 15th, and that the Germans entered on the morning of the 16th.

lected, however, that this observer had a strong German bias. There were undoubtedly numerous bad and poor-spirited soldiers in Chanzy's army; but that army could not have withstood its adversary so many days, or have assumed so threatening an attitude, had such been the quality of the greater number. The extent of its losses testified to the stubbornness with which, on the whole, it had met the enemy. It was calculated at Bordeaux that the entire loss of the French on the Loire during the first ten days of December was not less than 50,000 men, killed, wounded, and missing; and there was a week's fighting after that. The Germans must also have suffered very severely.

Simultaneous with these movements to the south and west of Orleans, some events of importance occurred in the north of France. The new commander of the French Army of the North, General Faidherbe, issued from Lille, on the 6th of December, a proclamation to his troops, the tone of which was singularly blunt and plain-spoken, and suggested on the part of the writer no slight distrust of the men he had to command. "M. Gambetta," he said, "has declared that to save France he requires from from you three things—discipline, morality, and contempt of death. I shall mercilessly exact discipline from you. If all cannot achieve morality, I shall at least require dignified conduct, and especially temperance. Those who are now armed for the deliverance of the country are invested with too sacred a mission to allow themselves the least license in public. As regards contempt of death, I ask it from you even in the name of your own safety: if you will not expose yourselves gloriously to die on the battle-field, you and your families will die of misery under the pitiless yoke of the foreigner. I need not add that courts-martial would deal justice to the coward, for none will be found among you." The North certainly required good soldiers and good commanders, for the Germans were advancing there as rapidly as elsewhere. On the 5th of December, a portion of the army of General Manteuffel (which, after taking Amiens on November 28th, had left for other directions) entered the interesting old Norman city of Rouen, situated on the Seine, not far from the point at which the river falls into the English Channel. Rouen was the capital of Normandy at the time when that province was an independent State under the rule of its warlike Scandinavian Dukes. It is therefore intimately associated with the mediæval annals of England, and it is with something almost of national regret that one reads of its humiliation. After the city had returned to the crown of France, it was besieged by our Henry V., and gallantly defended by a small garrison of 4,000 men, under the command of an heroic soldier, Alain Blanchard. The town was at length compelled to surrender by famine, and Henry vindictively executed the noble leader of the defence. In the reign of Henry VI., Rouen was the scene of another atrocity, in which we were at any rate accomplices. Joan of Arc was burnt there in 1431, on a preposterous charge of witchcraft; so that the people of Rouen have but little cause to remember the English with kindness or respect. In the sixteenth century the town was the scene of terrible excesses, committed now by the Huguenots against the Catholics, and again by the Catholics against the Huguenots. Sad memories of bloodshed and dissension cling about the quaint old place; but in these days it is a peaceful manufacturing town—one of the worst for encountering the rude shock of war. Its ancient lath-and-plaster houses and rich timber carvings render it a very picturesque city; and the fine Gothic cathedral is famous for its size and grandeur, and for its historic associations both with France and England.

Rouen gave the Germans but little trouble. A French army was drawn up in front, with a view to its protection; but before the general in command had time to organise his forces or complete his entrenchments, the Eighth Army Corps of the Germans, under the command of General von Göben, and forming part of Manteuffel's Army of the North, fell with great vehemence on a detachment of the French, which had been sent in advance of the main body to watch the movements of the Germans. The action took place on December 4th. The detachment was driven back, and the French commander, disheartened at the first onset, and fearing a still more disastrous attack, determined to retreat, and leave Rouen to its fate. The Germans, when pushing forward to the city on the following morning, found the road here and there dotted with 24-pounders, which the French had not had time to get into position. The batteries were unfinished, and camp-fires were still burning by the road-side. Before the main body of the Germans could enter the city, where as yet there was only a patrol of Hussars, a great shouting and noise, occasionally varied by a shot, was heard coming from the interior, and presently a magistrate approached the German general, and begged him to send some troops into the town as quickly as possible. The square of the Hôtel de Ville was in the hands of the mob, who had armed themselves with the cast-away weapons of the National Guards, and were threatening the life of the Mayor. The

civic hall had already been a good deal damaged by shots, and the Town Council were confined in a back room. It was a humiliating confession to be obliged to make; but a French mob is a thing to be feared, and even the help of the invader was better than no help at all. The Germans speedily marched in, and at once restored tranquillity. Shortly afterwards, the Intendant of the occupying corps had an interview with M. Nion, the representative of the Mayor. The German officer issued his commands that at ten o'clock on the ensuing morning all the horses in Rouen should be paraded in the square of the Hôtel de Ville, and also required the production within a few days of 40,000 pairs of boots, to be made according to a pattern which should be supplied; of 20,000 pairs of socks, 2,000 flannel shirts, 10,000 blankets, and 10,000 good cigars. M. Nion protested that to do this was impossible; on which the Intendant rejoined, "In that case, the general will impose on the city a fine of three times the value of those articles."* Thus did the Germans draw the support of war from war itself; and they never hesitated to enforce their will on the unfortunate citizens who fell beneath their power.

An account of the capture of Rouen, published in the French journal, *Le Havre*, states that the number of the German forces was estimated at from 25,000 to 30,000 infantry, with from twenty-five to thirty guns; while the French could only bring into the field about 12,000 or 13,000 Mobiles, 1,200 Éclaireurs, and a corps of Marines. These were stationed at Buchy; but so defective was the military administration, that on the evening of Saturday, December 3rd, the men had had no bread for twelve hours, nor did they get anything to eat until ten o'clock next morning. In Rouen itself there was the most complete disorder. The National Guards were assembled, but nobody seemed to know what to do with them, and for a long while they simply marched backwards and forwards. At length some were sent off in two different directions; but it does not appear that they were of much service. Orders were also given to despatch the gun-boats moored in the river, to spike and carry away the twenty-four naval guns sent from Havre two days before, and to destroy the siege-guns in position on the heights. The officials of the Telegraph department left with their instruments, the bank removed its specie, and the receiver of taxes quitted his post. It would appear that the Éclaireurs offered a determined resistance to the Prussian columns, and that the Mobiles and Francs-tireurs were crushed by the hostile artillery. Guillefontaine was bombarded, and there was fighting at Clères; but the struggle was mainly at Buchy. The battle ended in a complete rout, and the Swiss ambulance from Havre was abandoned, as well as the baggage. "The soldiers of the 62nd and 45th Regiments," said *Le Havre*, "wept with rage on learning of the defeat. Mobilised National Guards were seen in a state of drunkenness twirling round their muskets, and an officer of the Francs-tireurs of Havre was walking about with a woman wearing an officer's *képi* on her head: both were intoxicated." The customs officers of Rouen, the gendarmery, and some Marines, were despatched to Havre; and thus Rouen was left to the Prussians, who entered without further opposition.*

The disturbances in the city on the morning of the 5th were attributed by an officer of the Marine Francs-tireurs to indignation at the spiritless way in which the municipal authorities determined on surrendering the place. It was the National Guards, according to this gentleman, who, previous to being disarmed, fired at the Hôtel de Ville, shouting "Down with the cowards who have sold us to the Prussians! Death to them all!" Some of the town councillors were killed or wounded. It appeared that at two o'clock that morning (in effect, the middle of the night) a Prussian officer dressed as a civilian was brought into the town, and introduced to the municipal authorities, to whom he offered the following terms:—"You will deliver to us the town of Rouen, and we undertake to do no injury to the inhabitants, and not to cause any damage to property, on condition that you shall pay the sum of twelve millions of francs in ready money, that you shall disarm the National Guard and all the troops whom you can disarm, delivering to us their weapons, and all those which you have in the town, as well as the munitions. Fortified places shall be given up to us, with their pieces and munitions." These terms were at once accepted; and, considering that the army drawn up for the protection of Rouen had been beaten and driven off, and that there was no force within the city capable of resisting the Germans, it is difficult to see what else could have been done.

Immediately after the occupation by the German forces, the subjoined proclamation was issued by the Prefect appointed by the conquerors:—

"To the Inhabitants of the Department of the Seine-Inférieure.—After the occupation of Rouen and a great part of Normandy by the Royal Prussian troops.—By order of the Prussian Military Authorities.—All the

* Correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*.

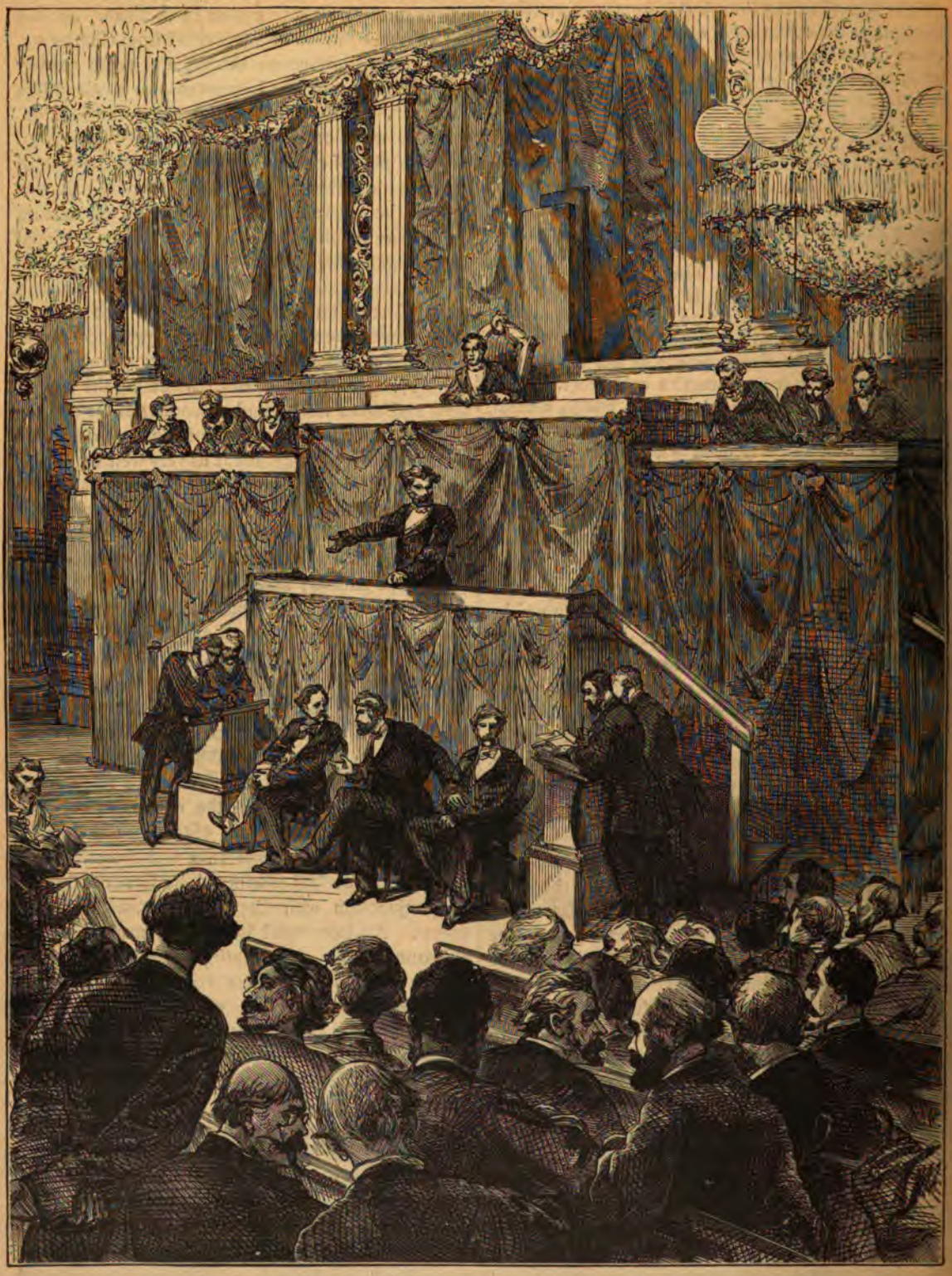
* See Appendix xiii., p. 566, "The Surrender of Rouen."

laws relating to the conscription and the Garde Mobile, all the decrees of the French Government concerning the call to arms, the *levée en masse*, and enrolments either in the regular army, the National Guard, Mobile or Stationary, the Francs-tireurs, or any other troops, are abolished. Every inhabitant who shall, in contravention of our orders, submit to the conscription, shall leave to undertake any service whatever, shall voluntarily enrol himself for military duty, or shall take part in any military service, will be liable to trial by a Prussian court-martial, and will be judged according to the Prussian military laws. Moreover, all his property and the commune in which he resides will be held responsible for him. The Mayors are charged with a careful supervision of all those within their jurisdiction who are liable to the above-mentioned laws and decrees, and are bound to acquaint us immediately with the disappearance of any able-bodied man belonging to their respective communes. Moreover, every individual who destroys a bridge, a canal, a road, a railway, or a telegraph line, will be tried by a council of war, and sentenced to death.

"The Prefect, H. CRAMER."

The severity with which the Prussians treated the people of Rouen and the vicinity was seen in many ways. Every district in which the direction-posts were destroyed or defaced was punished by the invaders with a fine, unless the local authorities immediately repaired the damage. The peasantry, it seemed, had frequently endeavoured in this way to obstruct the movements of the enemy; but the prompt measures of the Prussians speedily checked the practice. The money payment mentioned in the terms of capitulation seems to have been afterwards commuted for the boots, socks, &c., demanded by the Intendant. The superior officers took up their quarters in the chief hotels, and it was said that they ate well and drank much. The Mayor issued a notice, stating that all the communications were open, and urging the farmers to send in their cattle and produce as usual. The officers and men of the occupying force declared that they meant to spend the winter at Rouen, and there seemed every probability that they would do so. The permanent Prussian garrison was to consist of 8,000 men; but for the present there were at least 20,000 in the city.

The easy capture of Rouen spread great alarm at Havre, whither the army designed for the protection of the former city retreated after its brief collision with the enemy. On the 6th and 7th of December, several thousand Mobiles arrived at Havre from Rouen, by way of Honfleur. They had had a narrow escape from being captured by the Prussians. They were obliged to execute forced marches; and they accomplished sixty miles in three days. Though much fatigued and worn by their long and hurried journey, they appeared in good spirits, and much was expected of them. At the same time, two men-of-war arrived from Cherbourg, with 1,200 Marines on board; and some cavalry and companies of the Line were also stationed in the town. The men were billeted on the inhabitants, in some cases to the number of twelve; but the people of Havre received them well, and reckoned on their repelling the invader. Active preparations were made for warding off any assault. Guns were mounted on the ramparts; the National Guards were supplied with Snider rifles; men from forty to sixty years of age were required to assist in the defence; an Ambulance Corps was formed, and hospital accommodation was provided for at least 500 wounded. The town was strongly fortified by long lines of trenches, connecting the various forts and other works, and extending as far as Harfleur, four miles off. The Mobiles were described by an English correspondent as very well equipped, and armed with chassepôts. "These Mobiles, when going to the field," said this writer, "are supplied with a kit which consists of a pair of boots, pantaloons, tunic, woollen vest, flannel shirt, cape, and gaiters; knapsack, blanket, knife, fork, and spoon, with a three-pound loaf of bread. While on campaign duty, they are allowed half a pound of meat, with a pound and a half of bread, daily. They are also supplied with tents, each of which accommodates four men, and is carried in two parts. The small poles can be spliced on the principle of a fishing-rod. When pitched, they are about eight feet square, and the centre ridge about four feet high. Of course the men must crawl in on all-fours. The canvas is of the lightest description, but is at the same time waterproof." The defence was at first conducted by General Briand, in conjunction with Captain Manchez, a naval officer. An iron-cased locomotive made a reconnaissance as far as Barentin, where the presence of the enemy's scouts was ascertained. Prussian spies, real or supposed, were constantly being arrested. The inhabitants of the neighbouring communes were invited to take refuge in Havre, where large stores of cattle and fodder were formed, while the surplus outside the city, which might be useful to the enemy, was destroyed. Vessels left the docks, factories were closed, and schools were broken up. On the 11th of December the Sub-Prefect issued a proclamation of the usual flowery and boastful order, which, after the formal opening made up of the three words, "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity," proceeded:—"Citizens, the enemy has just attacked our outposts. We shall at least have an opportunity of avenging the honour of



SITTING OF THE DELEGATE GOVERNMENT AT BORDEAUX.



CAPTURE OF AMIENS.

Normandy, and of showing to France that Republican cities do not capitulate. Well armed, the sea behind us, the enemy in front, we must resist to the death. We have often promised this; let us be worthy of the hopes the country builds upon us. I have just sworn to the Government of the National Defence that I will answer for victory. It has put my oath on record. I know that I can count upon you. Count upon me. For I am strong in the support of the worthy representatives of our city, the devotion of our military leaders, and the Republican enthusiasm of the National Guard and our entire population. I wait, therefore, with confidence, the approaching hour when the Republic will decree that Havre, like Châteaudun, has deserved well of the country. To arms! Long live the Republic One and Indivisible!" This kind of stuff has always been the ruin of the French, by teaching them to rely on appearances rather than realities.

While the Sub-Prefect was attitudinising and declaiming, the Prussians, who have an ugly way of doing their work instead of talking about it, were steadily closing round Havre. They occupied Pont Audemer, situated on the high road from Rouen to Honfleur, on the evening of December 8th, and Dieppe on the following evening. They also seized Fauville, on the road from Yvetot to Fécamp, together with Bolbec (a town of 10,000 inhabitants, distant from Havre about eighteen miles) and Fécamp. The greater portion of the area within a triangle formed by Rouen, Havre, and Dieppe, was thus overrun by the German troops; and at many of the smaller towns within these boundaries they were heard of from time to time. A small engagement took place near Forges, where the French were defeated, with the loss of 300 prisoners. The occupation of Dieppe was only for a very short time. The troops entered on the evening of the 9th, and left next morning. Previous to taking possession of the place, the Prussians occupied the neighbouring hills with artillery, and then sent their infantry and cavalry into the town, with bands playing. The Staff proceeded at once to the Royal Hotel, facing the sea and promenade, while a party of officers walked through the streets, and, guided by a little book which one of them carried, marked on every door the number of men, or of men and horses, which the householder was to receive and entertain. At the same time, requisitions were made for various articles needed by the army, and several wagons were loaded with the produce. Cavalry patrolled the roads to a considerable distance; vessels were not allowed to leave the port, and pilots were forbidden to go off to ships arriving at the harbour. There is always a large foreign population in Dieppe, and the flags of a great many nationalities were soon floating from the windows, with a view to protecting those houses from the necessity of supporting the invaders; but in no case was any such exemption admitted. All on whom the lot fell were obliged to receive the soldiers quartered on them. It is said that the houses of our countrymen were especially visited in this way, and a good deal of apprehension was at first felt as to the conduct of the new-comers. But no harm was done, except at the castle, where 1,500 old flint-guns, of little value in these days of long-range weapons, were broken by the Germans. When all the troops were in the town, their commander, Count Alvensleben, faced them towards the sea, and called for three cheers for King and Fatherland. This was done, and the men rushed wildly towards the sea, which probably many of them had never seen before. The German invasion had touched on the English Channel—an achievement which would at one time have been regarded almost as an impossibility. On the morning of the 10th the detachment marched off, accompanied by a long train of wagons, and took the road to Paris. They returned on the 14th, in much greater force, and again departed on the 16th. During their second stay (according to a letter from the town), they made a demand for boots, wearing apparel, and money, and took away all the cigars and tobacco to be found in the tobacco factory. They also spiked the cannons on the coast, threw the balls into the sea, and fired on an English man-of-war, but allowed it to enter on its nationality being recognised. General von Göben afterwards gave orders for the free departure and arrival of all vessels from England. It is said that the Prussians discovered, in a wood near Dieppe, the body of one of their comrades, tied by his heels to the branch of a tree, with his eyes gouged out, and his nose and ears cut off. Of the conduct of the Prussians themselves in Normandy, various accounts are given; but, on the whole, it seems probable that they behaved with no greater rigour than military exigencies required.

Shortly after the defences of Havre were completed, General Briand was despatched to Cherbourg with four squadrons of Hussars, to operate against the enemy. Two thousand Mobiles were to have accompanied him, but the population protested vehemently against such a course, and made so violent a demonstration in front of the general's hotel, that it was thought prudent to countermand the order as far as the Mobiles were concerned. The general, however, afterwards sent for them

from Cherbourg; but the people of Havre again resisted their departure. General Briand having left, Captain Manchez was appointed commander-in-chief of the defence. Some skirmishing took place in the neighbourhood of Bolbec and Montevilliers between advanced bodies of Prussians and some French corps under the command of General Mocquart, on whom great reliance was placed, because of his dashing qualities. This officer was at the head of about 1,000 men, principally Francs-tireurs, who succeeded in capturing thirty Uhlans, and bringing them into Havre. The inhabitants of the small towns and villages flocked into Havre for greater safety, and some places were nearly abandoned. The roads were covered with lines of vehicles, loaded with the furniture and effects of families flying from the Uhlans; and many persons fled into England. The forts and trenches designed for the defence of Havre on the north extended along the heights flanking a deep valley (five miles in length) between Harfleur and Montevilliers. At the bottom of the valley runs the river Lezarde, and on the brow of the hills were planted 200 breech-loading cannons. A viaduct crossing the valley was cut through, and a temporary bridge thrown over. Behind these defences were lines of fortification in immediate proximity to the town, situated on the top of a hill forming a semicircle which extends almost from the Seine to the sea. Havre was therefore well protected by external works, and within the town were from 50,000 to 60,000 men in arms.

After a period of excitement and expectation, it appeared that the Prussians had no immediate design on Havre. They did indeed threaten it for a little while; but, after some skirmishing in the woods about the town, and in front of Montevilliers, between the Prussian cavalry and the advanced posts of the French occupying the hilly semicircle just mentioned, the enemy withdrew. This so encouraged the authorities, that the Sub-Prefect, M. Ramel, followed up his grandiloquent proclamation of the 11th by another, issued two days later, in which he declared that the Prussians were everywhere flying before the French with the utmost precipitation, even leaving behind them the cattle they had taken from the country people for their own requirements. Shortly after this announcement, a column of 30,000 men, according to an official statement, was despatched from Havre to cut off the Prussian retreat. The journal, *Le Havre*, said of the withdrawal of the enemy that it was "a flight, if not a disaster," and, referring to the alleged moderation of the Germans at Dieppe with respect to requisitions, observed that "they showed themselves rather humble than arrogant"—a fact to be attributed to their having "heard bad news." The same paper published an elaborate account of the Prussians entering and subsequently leaving several towns in that part of France, adding that in many instances the evacuation was so rapid as to justify the assertion that the enemy was in actual flight from Normandy. "In one village," said *Le Havre*, "they left without eating the meals they had ordered to be prepared; and in another place, where they had ordered all the muskets to be deposited at the Mairie, they passed through the town in hot haste a few hours later, without stopping to seize or destroy the arms thus collected." Rumours of the most astounding kind, and all of a hopeful—or rather of a triumphant—character, filled the air, and the people of Havre even expressed a desire to march on Paris. A telegram was posted up at Havre on the 14th of December, which stated, on the authority of the Mayor of Valmont, writing the day before, that the blockade of Paris was raised; that Bismarck and 80,000 men were blockaded at Versailles; that 50,000 prisoners and 50 guns had been taken, and 200 guns spiked; that Prince Frederick Charles's head had been carried off by a cannon-ball; that General Trochu was marching on Mantes with 100,000 men; and that General Vinoy was at Rouen with 60,000 men.

The inordinate, and indeed preposterous, character of these assertions is such as to raise some suspicion as to their origin. However readily French patriotism may have adopted and propagated them when once set afloat, it seems hardly possible that they can have been wholly of French manufacture. In that case, a greater regard to probability would surely have been shown. The detail with regard to Prince Frederick Charles's head having been carried off by a cannon-ball has a touch of grotesque satire which looks like the invention of some one who desired to ridicule the French love of fictitious glories. It seems, therefore, not unlikely that some of these extravagant accounts published at Valmont may have been concocted by the Germans themselves, with a view to luring their adversaries into some rash enterprise which might prove their ruin. Such a device is certainly quite in accordance with what we know of the subtlety and craft with which Prussia conducts her enterprises, and by which she turns the weaknesses of her enemies to as good purpose as her own strength. That the Germans did, just at this very period, forge despatches, supposed to be addressed to persons in Paris by French agents in the provinces, seems to be certain. The Parisian

Official Journal, of December 10th, contained a very remarkable statement to this effect. It appears that on the 12th of November the balloon "Daguerre," from Paris, fell at Ferrières into the power of the Prussians. Some pigeons accompanied the balloon, and these were retained by their captors. At five in the evening on the 9th of December, one of the pigeons returned to the pigeon-house in Paris to which it belonged, bearing a despatch dated "Rouen, December 7th," and thus expressed :—"Government, Paris.—Rouen occupied by Prussians, who are marching on Cherbourg. Rural population receives them with cheering. Deliberate. Orleans retaken by these devils. Bourges and Tours menaced. Army of the Loire completely defeated. Resistance no longer offers any hope of deliverance.—A. LAVERTUJON." Two hours later, another pigeon arrived with a despatch dated "Tours, December 8th," which ran as follows :—"Editor *Figaro*, Paris.—What disasters! Orleans retaken. Prussians two leagues from Tours and Bourges. Gambetta gone to Bordeaux. Rouen has given itself up. Cherbourg threatened. Army of the Loire now nothing but a mass of fugitives and marauders. Rural population making common cause with Prussians. Every one has had enough. Country devastated. Brigandage flourishing. Horses and cattle failing. Everywhere hunger. No hope. Let Paris understand thoroughly that Paris is no longer France. People wish *dénouement*." The signature to this despatch was illegible; but it appeared to be "Count de Pujol" or "de Puget." That appended to the first despatch was at once seen to be a forgery, because M. André Lavertujon was then in Paris, holding the position of one of the secretaries of the Government. No doubt whatever existed as to the pigeons being the same as those captured at Ferrières by the Prussians. The messages, moreover, were attached in a different manner to that adopted by the French Telegraph Administration, and, it was added, the phraseology, as well as the handwriting, betrayed a German origin. If, then, the Prussians resorted to a trick of this kind, to foster a feeling of despondency in Paris, where a really powerful army existed, and was beginning to inspire the besiegers with some uneasiness, it is conceivable that they may have employed similar means to excite undue confidence in a quarter where the military resources of the country were believed to be feeble, and where, consequently, any attempt to assume the offensive might have been supposed likely to lead to a crushing disaster.

Fortunately for the people of Havre, they soon relinquished their heroic project of marching on Paris, and awaited behind their fortifications the development of events. It very shortly became apparent that the Prussians were not "flying" from Normandy, but simply concentrating in fresh directions, with a view to a different series of operations. Under the command of its newly-appointed chief, General Faidherbe, the French Army of the North was developing unexpected strength. Its scattered fragments, temporarily dispersed after the actions at Amiens near the close of November, were speedily reunited in the neighbourhood of Arras and Lille. It therefore became necessary for the Germans to oppose this force; and on that account the troops which had been hovering about Havre and Dieppe were withdrawn for more arduous work. We must for the present, however, quit Normandy, to take note of events occurring in other parts of France.

A slight success fell to the French at Ham, in the department of the Somme—a place famous in modern times on account of the fortress in which Louis Napoleon was imprisoned from 1840 to 1846. At six o'clock on the evening of December 9th, a French detachment arrived before the town, which was held by a Prussian garrison. General Lecointre, the commander of the attacking force, stationed his men in silence, and Captain Phillipot, of the 91st Regiment, fell on the Prussian post at the railway station, killing the officer, and capturing the men. The French then rushed into the town, and the Prussians were so completely taken by surprise that several of the officers, who were playing billiards at a *café*, had not time to leave. The garrison consisted of 200 men, most of whom belonged to the field Railway Detachment. One gun was captured, as well as ten officers and seventy-six men. Acting upon information from the townspeople, many prisoners were made in private houses; but the greater number of the Prussians fled towards the fort, pursued by the French at the point of the bayonet. A *parlementaire*, accompanied by a lieutenant, was sent to the fort at midnight; but, according to the French accounts, they were fired upon. In this way, the flag-bearer was killed, and the lieutenant wounded. An hour later, a captain presented himself in the like capacity, accompanied by a Prussian officer who had been made prisoner; and the bases of a capitulation were then settled. It was agreed that the place should be surrendered at six o'clock in the morning, and that the officers who had been taken on the two sides should be exchanged.

Phalsburg—the first of the French fortresses attacked by the Germans—was at length compelled to succumb on the 12th of December. As early as the second week of August, the Crown Prince of

Prussia, then on his march from Wörth to Nancy, opened fire on its walls, but to no effect. The defences were battered by the German cannon, and the town was on fire here and there; but the commandant, General Talhouet, met a summons to surrender, sent to him on August 14th, with a firm refusal, to which he added that, on the following day—the fête-day of the Emperor—he should fire a salute of twenty-one guns. When informed by the besiegers, some months later, that d'Aurelles de Paladines had been defeated on the Loire, he still refused to surrender as long as he had any rations left. The Germans were too much occupied until the winter to make any very elaborate or serious attack on the place; and in the end it yielded rather to famine than to bombardment. It capitulated unconditionally, and, with the fortress itself, 52 officers, 1,839 men, and 65 guns, fell into the hands of the conquerors. Before the surrender, 12,000 muskets, with 800 rounds of cartridge for each, were destroyed, and all the cannon were spiked. The commandant offered to capitulate on the 11th, on condition of being allowed to march out with arms and baggage; but this was of course refused. On the same day, fourteen Mobiles deserted from the fortress. Every evening, for some time before the surrender, a sulphurous smoke ascended from the place, from which the besiegers inferred that the stores of gunpowder were being gradually consumed, preparatory to a capitulation. Phalsburg is situated in the Vosges Mountains, and was one of the great protecting strongholds of the north-east of France.

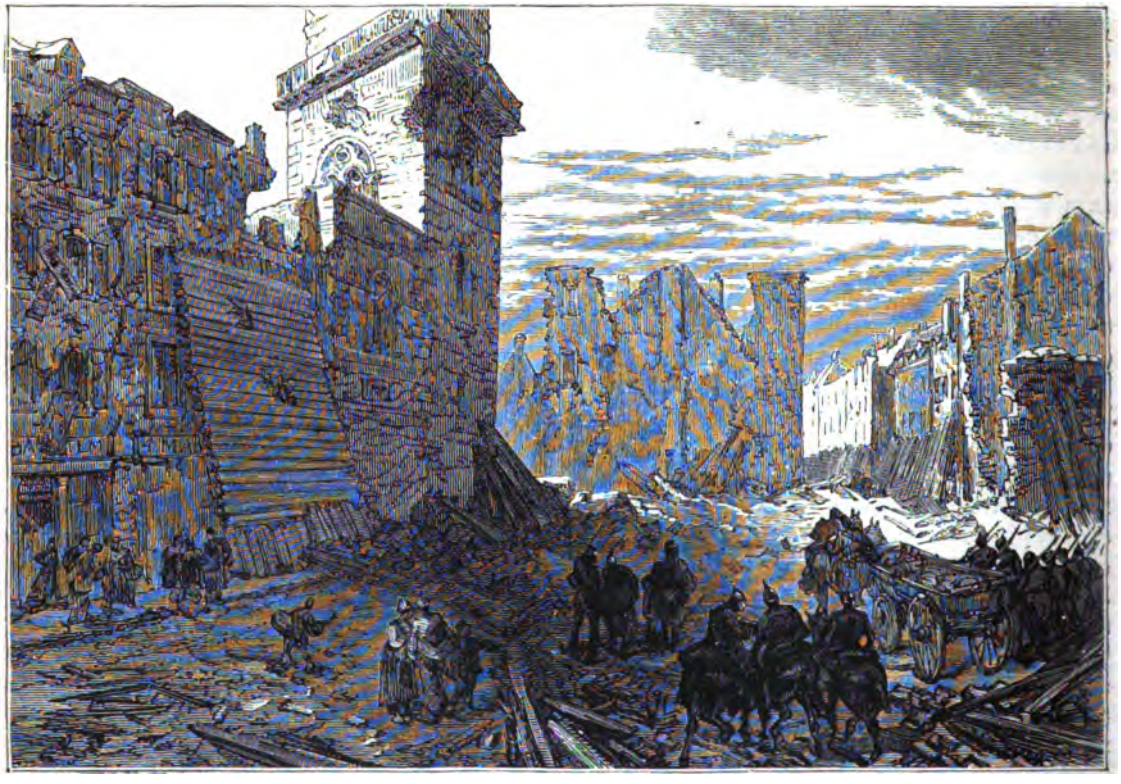
The investment of Montmédy was all this while being pressed. The Fourteenth Infantry Division, which was entrusted with the war against the frontier fortresses, lay before Montmédy in December, and the end was seen approaching. Between 300 and 400 German prisoners were confined in the fortress, and their countrymen asserted that they were ill-treated, being cooped up in prison-cells, and not allowed fresh air. The commandant was described in a Cologne paper as an impracticable, bitter Republican. Some negotiations for an exchange fell through, on account of the commandant requiring two Frenchmen for every German. For two days the fortress was bombarded by seventy heavy guns, the balls of which weighed, on an average, 150 lbs. each. These did frightful execution. The upper town was almost destroyed; the lower suffered but little. The capitulation of the place—which occurred on December 14th—was hastened by an incident which threatened the gravest consequences if the defence were persisted in. The iron roof of the powder-magazine was struck; and the commandant, perceiving that the repetition of such a disaster might result in the blowing up of the whole town, called a council of war, which unanimously agreed on surrender. Thirty or forty persons were killed during the siege, and sixty wounded. The Germans had only a few killed, as their guns were beyond the range of those in the fortress. As soon as the place was taken, the siege-train was forwarded to Mézières, in order that that stronghold also might be speedily reduced. On the day of the capitulation of Montmédy, a Pole, who had succeeded in gaining the confidence of the German garrison at Sedan, was detected in delivering arms to the French prisoners, and in promoting their escape. He was at once shot. The commander of the German forces was General Kameke, of Metz. The fortress had for a long while been a convenient place of refuge for the numerous bodies of guerillas in that part of France, who had given great trouble to the Germans, and had often imperilled the neutrality of Belgium.

CHAPTER IV.

Condition of Paris During the Great Sorties—Gradual Approach towards the State of Famine—Strange Food—A "Siege Dinner"—Patience of the Population—Increase in the Death-rate—Aspect of the City in the Early Part of December—The Belleville Battalion—Free-thinking Opinions in Religion—Counter-Statements with respect to the Treatment of the Wounded after the Sorties—Monseigneur Bauer—His Adventures on the Battle-field—Alleged Acts of Inhumanity—The Demoralisation of War—General Werder and the Francs-tireurs—German Charges against French Officers—Circular of Count Bismarck—A Question of Military Honour—Prospects of the French and Germans—New French Artillery—Causes of the National Failure—Opinion of a French Soldier—The Pigeons and the Balloons—Balloon Adventures—A German "Balloon-Gun"—The German Railway Detachment—Food Riots at Granville.

GREAT was the agitation of Paris during the progress of the events just related. As the sorties across the Marne were being carried out, and the Army of the Loire was making its desperate attempts to relieve the capital, the spirits of the population naturally underwent many changes of hope and despondency. Much was anticipated from the sorties, and, while the soldiers under

Ducrot were fighting the enemy, the National Guards were assembled and held in reserve on the Place Vendôme, where they were reviewed by General Clément Thomas, who, in a brief speech to them, said:—"At this moment, 150,000 of our fellow-citizens are engaged in battle: operations for breaking through the Prussian lines have commenced. Let us sustain the combatants by our union inside the city, ready as we are to second their efforts, and to march with them, when the moment to conquer has arrived. Citizens! always prepared for any event, your chiefs count on you: you may count on them." This speech was received with the usual cries, and the streets continued in a state of great excitement all day. When, on the following morning, rumours of success began to circulate, and it was thought by many that the city was about to be freed from the blockade which had so long oppressed it, several of the provision-dealers brought out stores of butter, sardines, and other articles of food which they had previously declared were quite exhausted. Not many hours later, however, when the state of affairs looked more grave, these suddenly-produced supplies were as suddenly withdrawn, and the vendors asserted that they had no such stores, and had never had any since the investment. The wary traders were again holding out for famine prices, which for a short time seemed to be imperilled. Every day the prospects of utter deprivation became more serious. Chemists devoted their utmost skill to the extraction of nourishment from substances not generally regarded as capable of yielding it. Bones, horns, and hoofs were converted into a product called *osseine*, which might be made into soup. The bowels, liver, and blood were also utilised. Various kinds of grease, and the fruit of the cocoa-nut, in ordinary times used in soap-making, were purified, and rendered fit for the table. Rats were in great demand, though the quarters in which they were caught gave them a very disgusting character. Holes were made in the bed of the sewers, and filled in with *soup de glucose*, a thick and sweet liquid. The rats, attracted by this, were lured into the holes, from which they were unable to escape, and where they were captured by thousands. A rat, "fat from the drains," as the "Besieged Resident" of the *Daily News* expressed it, cost one franc fifty centimes. Mice could be bought for about threepence each. Geese were sold at eighty francs each; turkeys at a hundred; chickens at twenty-five; and rabbits at



RUINS OF THIONVILLE.



TOOLS IN PLEDGE RETURNED TO WORKMEN AT PARIS.

thirty. Vegetables were scarcely to be had, and black bread, with all but the rich, took the place of white. Luxury itself, however, contrived, with true Parisian ingenuity, to extract a new relish from the strange food introduced by necessity. Some members of the Jockey Club determined to have a "siege dinner," comprising all the recently-adopted dishes. Baron Brisse, a well-known epicure, undertook to prepare the repast, and the following was the bill of fare:—"*Hors d'œuvre*, Radishes, herring *mariné*, onions *à la Provençale*, slightly salt butter, gherkins, and olives. First course: Soup of slightly-salted horse, with vegetables; ass-flesh cutlets, with carrots; mule's liver *sauté aux champignons;* horse's lights, with white sauce; *carp à la matelotte;* fried gudgeons; celery-heads, with seasoning. Second course: Quarter of dog braised; leg of dog roasted; rats cooked upon the ashes; rat-pie, with mushrooms; *Eel à la broche*; salad of celery and small salad. Dessert: Dutch cheese, apples, pears, marmalade *au Kirsch, gâteau d'Italie au fromage de Chester.*" The banquet is stated to have been a complete success.

The *Paris Journal* stated that one result of the action before Champigny was to add five days' supply to the store of fresh meat in the capital, as more than a thousand horses had been found in the lines carried by the Parisian troops, while their own loss of horses did not exceed three or four hundred. But five days' supply, though worth having, did not stave off the end to any great degree, and, as long as the investment remained unbroken, the danger of famine still lay sternly in front, and was not to be conjured away. The writer of a letter from Paris, dated December 15th, said:—"Since the 3rd we have had only a pound of horseflesh for five persons for three days, making thirty grammes per head daily. Formerly we could supplement our rations by purchase; but nothing is now to be got at any price. For variety, salted codfish is served out for three days, and salt herrings for three days. The butchers' shops are opened only every third day. Fresh vegetables are at an enormous price, and a fine cabbage costs five francs. Milk is only to be had for children. Our usual fare consists of beans, rice, and a few potatoes." An Englishman employed in the printing-office of one of the Paris newspapers wrote to his wife in England that for twenty days he had only received four ounces of meat, and that he had been obliged to support himself by the use of some olive-oil which he had by him. A lady, writing to an English friend on the 17th of December, spoke in the highest terms of the cheerfulness with which the people of Paris bore the miseries of their situation, and of the firmness of their resolve to hold out as long as a mouthful of bread was to be had. As yet, however, she added, they were in want of nothing absolutely necessary. People were beginning to appreciate horseflesh, and to be pleased when the Government ordered any to be distributed at the butchers' shops. When the time came for them to depend solely on dry bread, they would season it with a *bon mot*, and fancy they had had a good dinner. The terrible effects of scarcity were apparent, nevertheless. The usual result of deficient nourishment was seen in an alarming increase of mortality. During the week ending December 17th, the deaths in Paris reached a sum-total of 2,728, being an increase of 273 on the preceding week, and considerably more than double the ordinary number of deaths at that season of the year. Of course, this excess was more particularly apparent in the very young. Infants and little children perished in large numbers; and the frequent passage of small coffins through the streets added a peculiarly pathetic element to the general gloom.

The state of the city was very tranquil. By eight o'clock in the evening, not a sound was to be heard in the streets, except the roar of cannon from the forts; and Paris might have been a small country town, for any sign of life or dissipation that it presented. A good deal of the foolish fanfaronade which distinguished the earlier days of the siege had by this time worn itself out, and the better qualities of the French nature became more and more apparent as the trials of the time deepened and darkened with the waning year. That volatile, pleasure-seeking population had become grave and sedate. Every one appeared in sombre costume; an elegantly-dressed woman incurred the risk of being mobbed; and playing on the pianoforte was rigorously put down. It was a common thing for people to have themselves weighed once a week, to see how many pounds they had lost on their meagre diet. A stall, draped with tricolour flags, was erected in front of the steps of the Madeleine, at which were received subscriptions, in money or jewellery, for the casting of 1,500 cannon. A new drawing by Gustave Doré, with the title "Let us save Paris!" attracted large crowds of gazers, as it lay side by side with maps of the fortifications of the city. Of new literature there was none; but the booksellers offered as a substitute the various publications suppressed under the Imperial rule. The magazines of fashion, and all the satirical publications with the exception of the *Charivari*, had ceased to appear. Several revolutionary prints started

up, and perished after a brief existence; and the regular journals were reduced in size, owing to the scarcity of paper. The only amusements tolerated were musical performances and lectures; but of these there were but few, most of the theatres and public buildings having been appropriated for purposes connected with the siege and defence. The offices of the money-changers were closed, and even the Bank of France declined to give coin for notes, or larger notes for smaller ones. The Bourse was almost deserted; gold had disappeared from circulation; business, except for the barest necessaries, was at a standstill, and industry was wholly diverted into martial channels. The worst feature in the existing state of the city was the prevalence of caricatures offensive to public decency, which were openly exposed on the Boulevards. The most ominous fact was the passing through the streets of lines of carts laden with sand for the courtyards of houses, as a protection against the shells which the Prussians would pour into the city as soon as the bombardment began.* But days passed by, and still the terrible fire did not come.

Some of the prisoners taken during the sorties were extremely dispirited, if we may rely on accounts given by the Germans. Several stated that they should like to go back to Paris, not to fight against the Prussians, but to punish their own officers. Previous to the sorties, the Red Republican newspapers opposed the Ministers with great bitterness for their faint-hearted policy; and Félix Pyat threatened them with a fresh revolt, if something were not done. After the struggle, some of these journals wrote in extravagant phrases of the heroism of the Belleville battalion, though there can be no doubt that the men behaved badly. Even M. Pyat, in *Le Combat*, reminded them that empty words were of little worth when not followed up by effective acts. The *Paris Journal* remarked on the contrast which the action of the Republicans of Belleville presented to their speeches. It asked how it happened that in the recent fights the fire-eating ex-Major Flourens had not rushed to the front. It also wished to know where were the artillery of the National Guard, into which Colonel Schoelcher would only admit approved Republicans of long standing. The same paper remarked on M. Pyat's objection that in recounting the events of the siege the name of God should be in any way connected with the affairs of the Republic, and observed that it was not given to every one to attain the state of Republican exaltation in which Belleville was glorified and the next world despised. This fanatical hatred of religious forms and utterances is characteristic of all French revolutions, and appeared in many ways during the struggle with Germany. An obscure socialist at Toulouse having died during the month of December, the National Guards were mustered, without being told the reason. They escorted the body to the grave, where they were obliged to listen to a discourse by the Prefect denying the existence of God and the immortality of the soul. The Municipal Commissioner of Education, about the same time, said, in taking some steps against clerical teaching, that "the cross of the Crucified must give place to the statue of the Goddess of Reason." These acts and expressions were displeasing to many; but in certain quarters extreme opinions were rife, and for a time prevailed over all opposition.

Such was the dislike to the Belleville battalion entertained by some of the other National Guards, that there was considerable danger of a collision between them in the very face of the enemy. Colonel Le Mains, who commanded a brigade of the more conservative citizen soldiers, addressed the following letter, at the period of the fighting before Paris, to the General-in-Chief:—

"General,—I have the honour most urgently to request you to recall to Paris the *tirailleurs* of Belleville. Not only is their presence here not of the least utility, but it may lead to a serious conflict with the National Guards of the Battalion of La Villette, which is stationed beside them. The hatred existing between these two battalions is so great that they have formed in the trench a sort of barricade, which they have forbidden each other to cross. The presence of M. Flourens with that battalion has led to fresh difficulties, the officers not being willing to recognise him as their chief. This morning, the report of the commandant of the right wing informs me that he had been obliged to occupy and watch the trenches on the right, the *tirailleurs* of Belleville having abandoned their post. In our present circumstances a conflict between our own troops would be disastrous. On the other hand, the bad example which is constantly presented by the *tirailleurs* of Belleville is most pernicious. For these reasons, I beg you to recall them immediately to Paris."

Immediately afterwards, the Belleville battalion was broken up.

A great deal of recrimination took place after the sorties with respect to the treatment of the wounded, and of those employed in looking after them. The Germans asserted that while their ambulances were picking up the dead and wounded of both nationalities after the fighting at L'Hay and Chévilly, on the 29th of November, they were fired on by a

* Correspondent of the *Pall Mall Gazette.*

party of French stationed behind an earthwork which was flying a white flag with a red cross, the standard of the Geneva Convention. It was also stated that the French seized as prisoners of war all the sick and wounded Bavarians and Prussians in the hospitals of Orleans, left behind him by von der Tann when he hurriedly evacuated that place. On the 2nd of December, a hospital for the wounded was established at Chenevières, to the south-east of Paris; but the French shelled the village, which was a Prussian military post. The houses were soon in flames; the hospital caught; and the miserable sufferers were obliged to undergo the ordeal of being removed to safer quarters in the rear. It does not seem, however, that this firing of the hospital was other than accidental. The French, on their side, charged the Germans with breaches and abuses of the Geneva Convention, and declared that they had seen officers reconnoitring with the badge on their arms. They also stated that the French sick in the palace at Versailles had been made prisoners and sent to Germany, although some were actually in hospital before the war broke out. One of the most precise accusations made on the French side was that of Monseigneur Bauer, Archbishop of Syracuse, who, in a letter to the *Journal Officiel* of December 4th, alleged that he had been shot at by the Prussians while going forward with a flag of truce and a trumpeter. The Archbishop was a person of rather remarkable antecedents. He was originally a German Jew, but after a while became a Christian and a naturalised Frenchman. For ten years he was in the order of the Barefooted Carmelites, who observe great austerity in their mode of living. A constant diet of bread and water brought him to the verge of death; but, after being given over, he rallied and recovered his usual health. The Pope then absolved him from his vows, and in time he attained high office in the Church. Though still continuing to drink nothing but water, he lived in other respects like the majority of people. During the Empire, he was chaplain to the Court and confessor to the Empress; and he was now chaplain of the Ambulance of the Press, where he had under his orders 800 "Christian Brothers," dressed as priests, though they were not in holy orders. Both he and they are said to have exhibited great courage, and to have been always ready to go about the field of battle, searching for the wounded, long before the firing was over. Being an excellent horseman, he rode about at the head of his troop, presenting a strange compound of the soldier and the priest. His dress on these occasions generally consisted of a soutane and long boots; the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour hung on his breast; a golden crucifix was suspended round his neck, and a large episcopal ring glittered on his finger outside his gloves. Sometimes he wore a red cloak; and he certainly seems to have had an eye to dramatic effect in whatever he did. But he was very popular with the soldiers, and his self-devotion was unquestionable. The "Besieged Resident" of the *Daily News*, who gave these details of his personal appearance and general character, said he was as steady under fire as if he were in a pulpit. He was at the side of Ducrot when that general's horse was killed under him during the sorties.

The incident of which Monseigneur Bauer complained took place during an expedition across the Marne on the 1st of December (the day of the truce), undertaken with the usual benevolent intention. The facts were thus related by a correspondent of the *Times*, who was one of the party:—

"After crossing the Marne, we halted to take up a body of the Christian Brothers. I am told that yesterday they again greatly distinguished themselves by their coolness in going under fire to bring off the wounded, exciting the enthusiastic admiration of General Ducrot—no bad judge of courage—who took off his cap with a profound bow, and kept it in his hand as some of them came up and talked to him. With their long black robes darkening the white, frosty moonlight, they helped to make our procession very picturesque as we all alighted from the carriages at the last French barricades—the extreme outposts. A short halt to consult, and then Monseigneur—accompanied by a trumpeter, M. Gramond, Mr. Bower, and Mr. Elliott Bower, the couriers—rode forward towards the Prussians, some of whom I afterwards heard were concealed in the houses almost within a few yards of us, crouching forward with trigger-finger all ready on the needle-gun, to guard against a surprise. Those left behind carried on an animated discussion with French vivacity on all possible subjects, but chiefly on the chance of our being permitted to go on the battle-field. Twice or thrice the stillness of the night was broken by the sharp crack of a rifle from some ill-conditioned sentinel—a churlish misanthrope one would have liked to cudgel, for, passing Champigny, we had driven through dense rows of recumbent figures, trying, despite the cold, to snatch some brief repose, that they might recover a little from the hard labours of the day, before they were called on to face those of the next. Here the general buzz of conversation suddenly stopped, and there was a solemn hush as four priests requested passage through our group for a figure covered with a cloak and carried on a *brancard*. A young captain of Mobiles had indiscreetly exposed himself at the barricades, and been shot dead a few minutes before we arrived. The sight was too common to attract more

than a moment's notice, and the conversation buzzed on again until the Archbishop's return. He had seen, as I understood him, a Prussian officer, who told him where five bodies were to be found, but who sent him to another post, in a different direction, for further instructions.

"Before he again went forward, the Archbishop ordered the trumpeter to sound the *quatre appels* to inform the Prussians that a *parlementaire* was about to approach them. It was sounded loudly and distinctly, and, through the stillness of the night, ought to have been heard far into the Prussian lines. The moonlight was, moreover, clear enough to enable their sentinels to see the waving of the *parlementaire* flag; yet a few seconds afterwards we heard shots from the direction in which the Archbishop had advanced, and, returning, he told us that this unlucky incident left us nothing to do but to go home."

That there was serious mistreatment of the victims of the war on both sides seems to be clearly established. An English resident at Pau, in the south of France, sent to a German paper a sad account of the way in which the German prisoners there were used. They had for the most part been captured in and near Orleans, on the recovery of that city by the French, and numbered from 900 to 1,200, of whom the majority were Bavarians. The journey from Orleans to Pau had occupied four days, during which the prisoners had had nothing but dry bread and water. After their arrival at Pau, they seem, according to this authority, to have been no better off, until the wife of a Protestant minister with a German name interested herself in their behalf. For a time they were almost starved, and the sick and wounded were totally uncared for. A Frenchman told the writer of these details that he was ashamed of his nation, for that, whereas France used in former times to be noble and chivalrous, she now acted in a precisely contrary spirit. The same conduct, however, was alleged, with equally good authority, against the Germans. The English papers contained shocking accounts—coming, apparently, from unprejudiced witnesses—of the sufferings of the French soldiers in German prisons; of the meagre fare on which, in the depth of winter, they were expected to support life; of their deprivation of fire and warm clothing; and of the acts of violence to which they were subjected, if they ventured to remonstrate, or showed any signs of insubordination. There can be no doubt that the Germans became exasperated by the unexpected prolongation of the war, and lost all the more generous feelings with which they entered it. Even Dr. Russell, who, being attached to the Royal head-quarters at Versailles, acquired a rather courtly and decidedly German feeling, testified to the changed manners of the conquerors in this respect, and related that "a Prince, the administrator of a great charity, and an officer of State," exclaimed, on being asked some question as to the means of communicating with the wounded officers of the enemy's army who might be in his hospitals, "I know nothing about them. They give us quite trouble enough as it is. I wish they were all dead!" These words were uttered in the presence of a British officer, who repeated them to Dr. Russell. "And," added the latter, "a German gentleman, speaking of some things he had witnessed, declared he could not have believed, had he not seen with his own eyes, that Germans could be so violent, so unscrupulous, and so dishonest." Herr Wachenhusen, writing to the *Cologne Gazette*, said, with reference to some Frenchmen who had been taken prisoners, "They have to thank the good-nature of the Bavarians for giving themselves the trouble to capture them; for amongst our troops there are many who no longer give these opponents any quarter, as I have, I think, especially observed among the Mecklenburgers." Miss Pearson, a lady who went out to France in connection with the hospital staff of nurses, spoke in terms of great indignation of the conduct of the Prussians to the old Bishop of Orleans, Monseigneur Dupanloup, whose offence probably consisted of the circular to his clergy, stimulating the national resistance to the utmost, of which notice has already been taken.* According to Miss Pearson, he was insulted by a Prussian officer in his own house, where he was virtually a prisoner. He bore the insult with great gentleness, only saying, as he fainted, "Oh, sir, I can do no more!" The peasantry (the same lady averred) were robbed of everything they possessed; but, it was added, the blame in this respect lay chiefly with the common soldiers and the camp-followers, the officers, as a rule, being kind and considerate.

It would be an idle task to endeavour to apportion the degree of condemnation for these atrocities attachable on the one hand to the French, and on the other to the Germans. They were probably guilty in an equal measure; or, if more is to be charged against the latter than the former, it is doubtless because they had greater opportunities of ill-doing. War is an utterly demoralising and de-humanising fact, and reduces all nations to the same level of remorseless savagery. With a few specially noble natures it may perhaps call into active operation the virtues of generosity and self-abnegation; but with the great mass of

* See Vol. I., p. 548.

fighting-men its effect is to debase, to harden, and to brutalise. For one Bayard or Sidney it produces a hundred Alvas and Haynaus; and the homicidal appetite, once excited by combat, seeks for opportunities of gratification even beyond the absolute necessities of the struggle. Of all the pernicious illusions ever held forth for public misguidance, surely the worst is that which teaches us to look

To this, General Werder replied that he had given orders to investigate the case of which the colonel had apprised him, and that, whatever the result, similar incidents would not occur, and that he should never permit a prisoner of war to be sent to the gallows. This was certainly a great improvement on the practice of other generals. The position of the irregular troops improved with time.



RECONNOITRING THE ENEMY'S POSITION.

for the regeneration of the world through the immeasurable crimes of international conflict.

In one direction, however, the Prussian habit of hanging Francs-tireurs received a check. Three of these irregular soldiers having been hung by Baden soldiers in the neighbourhood of Dijon, Colonel Bourras wrote to General Werder:—"I am informed that three of my Francs-tireurs, who were captured by your soldiers, have been hung. I beg to ask you whether this was an isolated case which will not be repeated. If this manner of treating prisoners becomes the rule, I shall be obliged to resort to reprisals on the seventy prisoners of war who are at present in my hands."

They themselves acquired greater discipline and cohesion, and probably inspired a more respectful feeling on the part of the enemy. The high-handed manner in which they had been treated by the Prussians had aroused a very strong expression of indignation on the part of other countries; and, although this circumstance probably exercised but little influence on the German military authorities generally, it may have had some effect on the judgment and conduct of General Werder.

Another subject of complaint was the alleged breaking of their word of honour by French officers who had been made prisoners of war, and

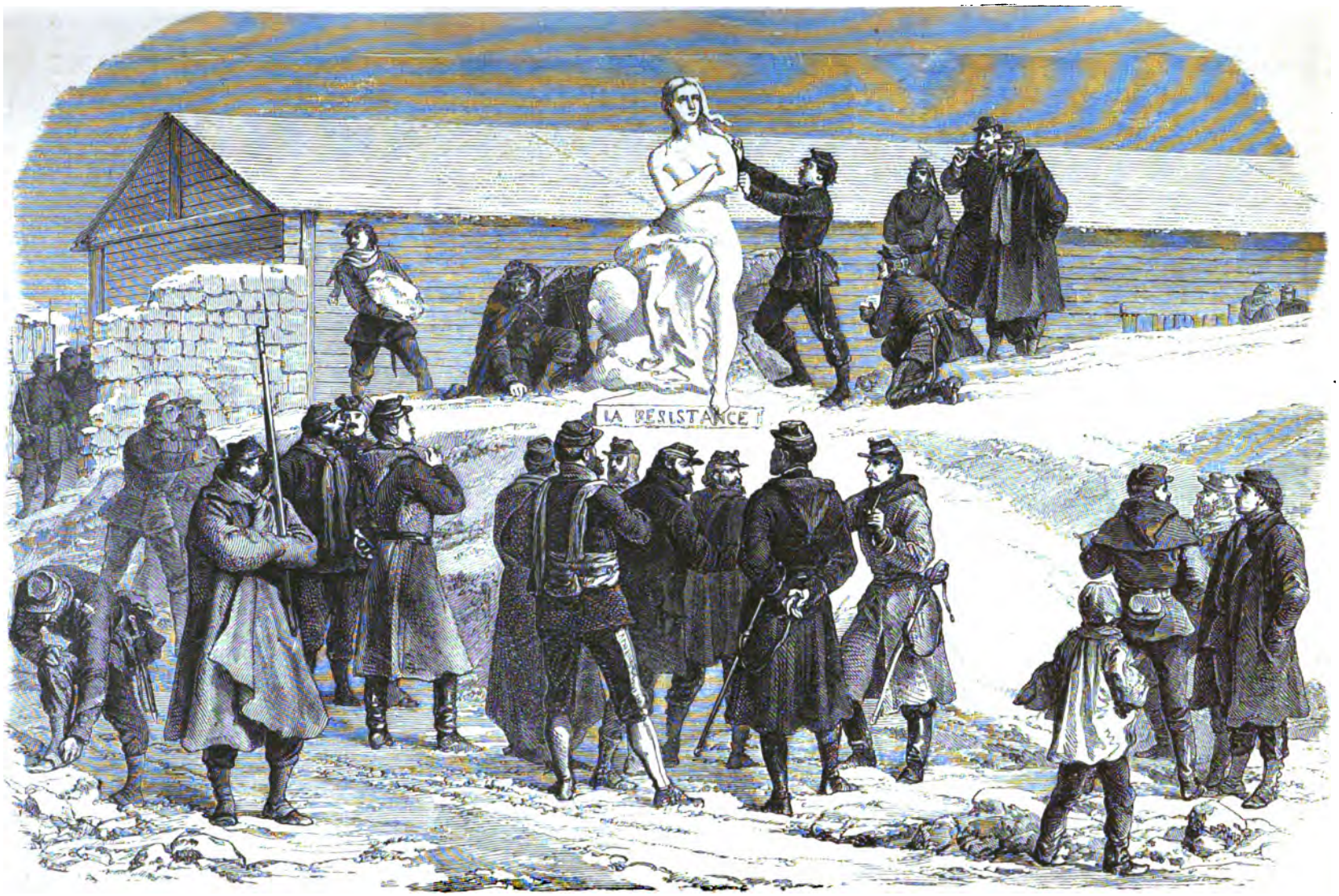


FIGURE OF "RESISTANCE," EXECUTED IN SNOW ON BASTION NO. 85.

who, having been allowed a certain amount of liberty, took advantage of it to desert and rejoin the national forces. The Berlin papers, in the course of December, gave an official list of fifty-two French officers who had in this way violated their parole. They consisted of one chief of battalion (a member of Marshal Bazaine's Staff), one colonel, sixteen captains, seventeen lieutenants, fifteen sub-lieutenants, a commissariat adjutant, and a veterinary surgeon. Two of these were afterwards re-captured. A circular on the subject was addressed by Count Bismarck to the North German Ambassadors at foreign courts, under date "Versailles, December 14th, 1870." The Count here observed that the facts to which he was directing attention, and the declarations on the subject which several of the implicated officers had put forth, showed that ideas of honour, at least among a certain proportion of the French army, differed materially from those which prevailed among the Germans. On the 2nd of September the German armies had it in their power to annihilate the French forces shut up in Sedan, "singly or in the mass, by arms or by famine;" but, confiding in fidelity to engagements, they acceded to the well-known capitulation. When that capitulation was signed, General Wimpffen guaranteed its fulfilment by the officers placed under him, and, according to the usual notions of military honour and the general law of treaties, officers were bound to respect the agreement, even though certain isolated individuals might have disapproved of the surrender. As a matter of fact, all the officers availed themselves of the concessions made in the capitulation, in order to retain their lives and property; but a few of them had abused the trust which had been placed in their honour.

"Among these (continued the Count) were Generals Ducrot, Barral, and Cambriels. Your Excellency will have observed in the newspapers the statement of the first of these, in which he relates how he escaped from the railway station at Pont-à-Mousson, and, by means of casuistry which I will not discuss, explains how he deceived the confidence reposed in him, abused the privileges afforded him, and, according to his own opinion, did not break the word of honour personally given by him after the conclusion of the capitulation, but at any rate evaded it. In a letter published in the *Siècle* of the 15th of November, in which General Cambriels defends himself with a lively feeling of honour against certain reproaches cast on him from the French side, he mentions incidentally, and as quite a matter of course, that he profited by the capitulation in which he was included, and by our considerate treatment of the wounded, in order to escape secretly from Sedan. General Barral, so far as I know, has made no attempt to justify or gloss over his having given his word of honour not to take up arms against Germany in the present war, and to repair to his assigned place of residence, and his having immediately afterwards treacherously entered the French army. After these proceedings, it is less surprising, though not less striking for an army jealous of its honour, if any officers of lower rank have by a breach of their pledge of honour escaped from the places in Germany wherein free and uncontrolled movement had been allowed them in reliance on their pledged word of honour not to depart. Considerable as the number of these word-breaking officers is, it nevertheless constitutes but a small fraction of the whole number of their honourable comrades, who have not hitherto been made at all responsible by a more stringent supervision for the unworthy conduct of the former. The matter, however, assumes another aspect when the breach of their word by the fugitive officers is officially approved by the Government of the National Defence, through the placing of them in the army fighting against us, and when hitherto no refusal to accept word-breaking officers in their ranks has been known to proceed from the active French army."

The allied German Governments were consequently bound to consider whether they could in future grant the usual privileges to captured French officers, and whether any confidence could be placed in the fulfilment by French generals or by the French Government of any convention which might be concluded, without material guarantees. Such were the views expressed by Count Bismarck on the vexed question with respect to the alleged breach of parole of the French officers. It is not to be expected that the French acceded to those views; and the question was one which could hardly be decided by either of the parties to the dispute. Both were too much in hot blood to distinguish between abstract notions of honour and the promptings of personal or national advantage.

Just before the sorties, General Ducrot submitted to a court of honour, presided over by General Trochu, the question whether or not he was justified in escaping from imprisonment. His statement was to the effect that he refused to sign the capitulation of Sedan, and was therefore put in the position of a prisoner; that he gave his word of honour to proceed to Pont-à-Mousson, in order to report himself to the military authorities there; that he accordingly went to that place, but was told that the first train was full, and that he must wait for the next; and that thereupon he considered himself freed from any obligation, as he could not be responsible for the Germans not having secured his person. He then asked if he might visit a friend in the town, and received permission, without any pledge being asked or given as to his return. At this friend's house, he and his two aides-de-camp

were supplied with peasants' dresses and a country cart with a load of potatoes. The general, dressed in a blouse and trousers, with a pipe in his mouth, a peasant's hat on his head, and bare feet thrust into sabots, rode on the side of the cart; one of the aides de camp led the horse, and the other sat on the potatoes. In this way they passed safely through the Prussian lines. General Trochu and the other members of the court, with the exception of a brigadier and a lieutenant-colonel, who remained neutral, decided in Ducrot's favour. The point is one on which an enormous amount of casuistry might be expended; but it is difficult not to feel that, if the general did not actually break his word, he evaded it. Of a less easy conscience was Lieutenant-Colonel Fourchault, who, having been set at liberty on parole after the capitulation of Metz, presented himself, some weeks afterwards, before Prince Frederick Charles, begging to be sent to Germany, as he feared that forcible measures would be employed by his countrymen to compel him to rejoin the army. This conduct was officially announced by the Germans, with encomiums; but in France it was probably thought that German encomiums on a Frenchman were equivalent to the heaviest censure.

The ordinary French feeling with regard to the Prussians was expressed by General Chanzy, towards the end of December, in a protest sent by him from Le Mans to the officer commanding the Prussian forces at Vendôme. The general wrote:—

"I am informed that violence, for which I can find no language suitable to express my indignation, has been resorted to by the troops under your command against the innocent population of St. Calais, notwithstanding their good treatment of your sick and wounded. Your officers have extorted money and authorised pillage. This is an abuse of power which will weigh upon your conscience, though patriotism may enable our countrymen to bear it. But it cannot be permitted that you should add to this injury a gratuitous insult. You have alleged that we are defeated. This is false. We have fought and held you in check since the 4th of December. You have dared to treat as cowards men who could not answer you, pretending that they submitted to the will of the Government of National Defence in resisting when they really wished for peace. I am justified in protesting against this statement by the resistance of the whole of France, and by the resistance of the army, which up to the present time you have not been able to conquer. We re-assert what our struggle has already taught you; we shall struggle on, conscious of our good right, and determined to triumph at any cost. We shall struggle to the uttermost, without truce or mercy. It is now no longer a question of fighting against a loyal enemy, but against devastating hordes, whose sole object is the ruin and humiliation of a nation fighting for the preservation of its honour and independence, and the maintenance of its rank. You reply to the generosity with which we treat your prisoners and wounded, by insolence, by arson, and by pillage. I protest with indignation, in the name of humanity and the law of nations, which you trample under foot."

In agreeable contrast to these violent recriminations, an action honourable to both sides should here be recorded. On the 8th of December Trochu addressed to one of his generals the following note:—"I hear with sincere concern that the four Prussian officers whom I had ordered to be escorted to Paris, have been subjected to malevolent demonstrations approaching to insult. These captive officers, on parole, as ours in Prussia, are under the protection of our military honour. Send them to me immediately. I shall arrange for their exchange with an equal number of French officers of the same rank. They will only be able to convey to the Prussian army tidings of the moral condition of Paris, supported as it is by a spirit of devotion and sacrifice which has not at any time been more firm; and that all of us are preparing for the combat." Next day an officer deputed by General Trochu arrived at the outposts, and applied to a member of the Würtemberg staff, Captain Servey, to whom he delivered the four Prussians, dressed in plain clothes. Captain Servey remarked that the French officers who had been taken prisoners on the 30th of November and the 2nd of December had probably already been sent away, only wounded officers remaining in the ambulance. He undertook, however, in case the French officers had not left, to send four officers in exchange; otherwise, to return the four Prussian officers.

On the 17th of December, General Trochu, addressing the officers, sub-officers, and soldiers under his command, said:—"We have in common made efforts for our country which have served our sacred cause. Our brothers of the Army of the Loire, who have been inspired by the patriotism of the provinces, as the Army of Paris has been inspired by the patriotism of Paris, give us an admirable example. Like us, they 'renew themselves' under fire, at the price of heroic sacrifices, in a struggle which astonishes the enemy, troubled by the enormity of his losses and the indomitable energy of the resistance which he encounters. May these noble encouragements sustain you! May the grand spectacle of the citizens of Paris—soldiers like you, fighting with you in the close union of peril—elevate you to the height of every duty and every danger! May your general infuse

into your souls the hopes, the sentiments, and the firm resolutions with which his own is filled!" Such were the words in which the head of the Provisional Government sought to maintain the spirits of his countrymen. Some consolation was undoubtedly needed; but it was needed not merely on the French side. The Germans were much disappointed at the progress they were making, or rather at the entire want of progress with respect to Paris. In the first instance they had supposed that the capital would be frightened into submission. Then they hoped that famine would compel an early surrender. Months had passed away, and neither the sight of the investing lines nor the pressure of hunger had induced the Government of the National Defence to throw open the gates of the city. The power of resistance in the French nation had shown an unexpected tenacity, and it was impossible from day to day to say what might happen. Germany had lost enormous numbers of the flower of her youth and manhood, and still further sacrifices were demanded. One hundred and fifty thousand freshly-embodied Landwehr were on their way to the seat of war, and these were men of mature age, who had already served their time with the colours, and who probably never expected to be again called upon for active service.

The French were certainly exhibiting energy in many ways. Their arms of precision grew more formidable every week. In addition to the armour-plated locomotive, of which some account has already been given, and which, with its powerful mitrailleuses, did good service in the great sorties, they produced a mitrailleuse firing 250 balls a minute, another firing 480, a third, worked by steam, which discharged the astonishing number of 4,500 balls in the minute, and a fourth, called "the mower," which was said to operate without noise, smoke, or fire, to have a range of from 500 to 600 yards, and to be remarkably cheap in the manufacture and working. Many new descriptions of shells—some of them emitting suffocating vapours—were also made; and if ingenuity could have saved the nation, it would in the end have been victorious. Unfortunately, however, the failure of the French lay at a greater depth than could be touched by any sudden, and to some extent spasmodic, exhibition of energy or mechanical resource. For many years past—not simply during the Empire, as partisan writers are fond of asserting, but for at least a century—the French character had been undergoing a serious decline. Licentiousness, frivolity, boastfulness, insubordination, irreverence, cynicism, and a lamentable habit of setting fine phrases and theatrical attitudes in the place of noble and unpretending deeds, had sapped the national strength at the very foundations, and left it perilously disqualified to encounter any blow delivered sternly and with earnest purpose. These vices and foibles were perhaps never entirely absent from the French nature; but it can hardly be denied that they have increased greatly since the middle of last century. The Revolution which closed that century in blood, seemed for a moment to arouse once more the old vigour of the race; but the impetus died out, and left the exhaustion greater than before. Indeed, the Revolution, fruitful as it was in noble ideas, has, by some perverse spirit of misinterpretation or misapplication, added in no small measure to the influences which have dragged the country down. It has fostered to a monstrous growth the national love of fine phrases; set privilege in the place of duty; made rebellion a virtue for its own sake, instead of, at the best, a miserable necessity; weakened the respect for law; and changed politics from a grave and deliberate science into an epigram, a tumult, a piece of declamation, or a plot.

These melancholy truths were apparent to some Frenchmen during the crisis of the war. A French soldier, writing to his parents in the middle of December, said:—"I have lost all hope that France will recover from the blows she has received. You may say to all those who chatter about politics, that France is conquered and betrayed, and that she will be again. Why? Because three dragons rule in France—Indifference, Ignorance of Military Art, and Party Spirit. No one cares for aught but himself. National unity is extinct. What has become of the French of former times? They are dead. There is no more submission, no more discipline. Without discipline, no army is possible. The parties will continue to devour us. Civil war is inevitable—enormous imposts, requisitions, &c. We are an old people. We submit to the fate of all great nations. What has become of the Greeks, the Persians, the Romans, the Moors, the Turks? They were all great nations. What are they now? Vile wrecks, the sport of other nations. Such is our destiny. We are already one of those ancient peoples; we are in our decadence; this time one rag, another time another; soon there will remain nothing. Austerity, the first source of all virtues, is wanting in France. Our defeats are only the consequence of the serious disorders which exist and multiply daily in the country." The writer of this letter was certainly filled with the spirit of prophecy when he said that civil war was inevitable, and that faction would continue to devour the

nation. That unity, of which Frenchmen have been so proud, has in truth almost ceased to exist. There is not one France; there are many. A long succession of revolutions has left a fatal legacy of division to the land. Republican France, Buonapartist France, Bourbon France, Orleanist France, are perpetually at issue with one another, and ready to risk all on a struggle or a conspiracy for power. The Republican party is even divided against itself, and filled with as much internecine hatred as it exhibits towards the whole body of Monarchists. This tendency to disintegration is certainly due in the largest degree to the high priests of revolution; because it is they who have consecrated the fact of insurrection as the first virtue in politics, and have set the physical force of minorities above the moral right of the greater number to determine the form of government. With all these influences at work, it is no wonder that France should have tumbled into ruins beneath the swift, strong blows of Germany. Nevertheless, we may be permitted to hope that the French soldier was wrong in believing the evils of his country to be irreparable. The greatness of a land so favourably situated, so richly endowed, so famous in all the arts of war and peace, cannot have wholly and finally vanished in these days of highly developed civilisation, wherein there are so many means of conserving and perpetuating the conquests of intellect, and of arresting the incursions of barbarism. The permanent ruin of France would be the extinction of one of the chief lights in the European constellation. If she *is* to be ruined, it can only be by herself; and, in spite of many mistakes, the progress of the war showed enough of heroism, of devotion, of steady persistence, and of patient submission to the bitterest trials of fate, to redeem a people from consequences otherwise legitimate, and indeed inevitable.

The two great institutions of the pigeon and the balloon continued to be of marked service to France. But, as the year drew towards its close, the pigeons were found to be less useful than they had proved in earlier months. They would not fly during the night; and the December days were so short that messages were in this way frequently delayed. When the birds were sent from the south of France, it was necessary to convey them a long part of the way by hand, and to set them loose at such a distance from Paris as they could traverse before sunset. If not, they went to roost wherever they could, and sometimes failed to continue their journey on the following day. The balloons also were liable to accidents, but, on the whole, did wonders in keeping up intercommunication. They were for the most part made of strong calico, covered with two or three coatings of linseed-oil and oxide of lead, and inflated with ordinary gas. Some were manufactured at the Northern, others at the Orleans, railway station; and at the former the pieces were sewn together by machinery. One of the most adventurous of these balloon voyages was that of M. Martin, a naval officer from Finisterre, who gave an account of his experiences to the Bordeaux correspondent of the *Daily News*. M. Martin started from Paris on the 1st of December, in a balloon which had been christened the "Jules Favre." He rose at once above the snow-clouds into a stratum of bitter cold air, along which he was borne with great speed in a westerly direction. He felt like a man who had been buried alive in a vast, dark, chilling vault, beyond the reach of human sympathy or aid. Presently the stars were obscured by snow-clouds, and it was also found that the instruments used by aëronauts for taking their bearings had got out of order. At four o'clock in the morning, M. Martin and his companion perceived water below them, which at first they supposed to be the Loire; but shortly afterwards, seeing a lighthouse and ships, they found they were in the neighbourhood of the sea. They were above Belle-Isle, and close to the western side of it, so that it was necessary to descend at once, if they would not be swept away over the Atlantic. The pulley which opened the escape-valve had been blown out of reach by the fury of their rushing passage through the air; but M. Martin climbed up the ropes, regained the pulley, and released the gas. They now descended with such rapidity as to lose consciousness. The balloon, on nearing the earth, dashed madly about, tore off the roof of a house, broke down a wall, and came into collision with an old church. M. Martin's companion was thrown out and seriously hurt, and M. Martin himself, on recovering his senses, found that some coast-guardsmen were holding down the car. Among the persons soon attracted to the spot was M. Armand Trochu, brother of the Governor of Paris. This gentleman had a little property on Belle-Isle, where he lived with his mother, then in her eighty-fourth year. By a strange coincidence, it was the roof of M. Armand Trochu's house which the "Jules Favre" tore off in its wild writhings. The old lady had been praying throughout the night for a sign from heaven that France should be saved by her son; and when the rafters crashed over her head, she exclaimed to her grand-daughter that the sign had been given, and that "the Providence of the King of Prussia" was not always to prevail.

A vivid description of the appearance of th

earth, as seen at night from the cars of these balloons, was given by M. Jules Buffet, who, with some others, left Paris one evening for Tours. He wrote:—

"Paris, seen by night, and from the height of one mile and a quarter, to which we rose, has something very striking about it; the lights of the ramparts seemed to combine, so as to surround the city with a girdle of fire, and the streets appeared like brilliant lines cutting each other. Soon, however, all these lines of light mixed with each other, and Paris became only a luminous spot, then it sank to a shining point, and then it was lost altogether. Nothing round the city indicated the Prussian positions. The balloon ran rapidly towards the north; its management was an easy matter, and the aërial machine proved itself an excellent one. We had all three, however, ascended for the first time, and the title of aëronaut weighed a little heavily on my shoulders, which were young in that capacity. At one o'clock we distinctly saw lights placed in a rectangle, and at regular distances from each other. We could only make conjectures, but everything led us to think that they must be forts or redoubts intended to protect the Prussian army in the rear. I and my fellow-passengers conversed on all that we could perceive; and this conversation, carried on at a height of from one and a quarter to one and a half miles, with an enormous dome suspended above us, and in the midst of perfect silence and apparent immobility, had something startling about it. Roads spread themselves out like whitish lines on the black base of the picture, and were lit up here and there by luminous points. Towns, which always appeared like lines of fire, succeeded each other. Suddenly the whole earth appeared illuminated; a great number of red lights attracted our attention, and distant noises made themselves heard. This, as I have since learnt, was the coal-basin of Charleroi; and it was the innumerable forges and blast-furnaces of that district which caused these lights and these startling noises. The night glided away with alternations of darkness and artificial twinkling gleams; and now, from the faint light which invaded the sky, we perceived that day was about to break. The weather continued beautifully fine, and at a height of nearly two miles we saw the sun arise in his glorious majesty—a spectacle never to be forgotten. The change was marvellous. Little by little the earth appeared, and amid the perfect silence of the regions through which we passed we distinctly heard the cock crow. The spectacle which we witnessed reminded one of a picture from which the covering was gradually removed."



M. DELESCLUZE.

They soon descended, and found themselves at Casterlé, in Belgium, where they were very well received.

Sometimes the balloons very perversely fell on German soil, and then they and their occupants were made prize of war. On the 15th of December, a large balloon from Paris descended near Herborn, in Nassau. The writer of a letter in the *Cologne Gazette* said that, having observed the balloon passing over at no great distance from the earth, he followed it, accompanied by about thirty artisans. Shortly afterwards it landed in a woody glade; the aëronauts alighted, and unloaded their cargo, which consisted of a sack of letters, a small box, a basket for carrier-pigeons, and some other things. The passengers had no idea that they were in the enemy's country. The writer of one of the letters from Paris, dated December 13th, said:—"I should want ten pages to describe all our bodily and mental sufferings. What will become of us? Famine is drawing near. Paris is very sad, but full of courage and energy." Such confessions were of a nature to double the courage and energy of the Germans. The latter, however, seem to have been a good deal troubled by balloons; and Herr Krupp, the celebrated inventor of the gun called after him, contrived a piece of artillery for special service against the aëronauts. This weapon had a carriage and wheels like other field-guns, and could be served by a single man with the greatest ease, as it weighed only about 150 pounds. It could be rapidly aimed in any direction, whether horizontal or vertical. The charge consisted of a grenade weighing about three pounds, the object of which was to make the balloon explode on its bursting. It was affirmed that a balloon could be struck at a height of 2,000 feet, and that the horizontal range of the gun was about five miles. The idea was ingenious, but it does not seem to have been turned to any practical account during the war.

Their highly-developed railway system was of much greater assistance to the Germans. The invading armies were furnished with Railway Detachments, whose business it was to repair the damage done to the great lines by the French. These detachments (of which Prussia had four and Bavaria one) consisted partly of railway "navvies" and partly of engineer troops, and, on the advance of an army, they were to reconnoitre the intervening



BATTERY OF MARINES.

lines, remove obstructions, restore destroyed bridges, adapt the stations to military purposes, construct new lines and stations, and, finally, direct the traffic. In the event of retreat, they were to carry off the carriages or render them useless, destroy the lines, bridges, watercourses, &c., and thus deprive the enemy of the advantages of rapid communication. The Bavarian Detachment comprised a superintendent, three engineers, two engineer-assistants, two machine-managers, eight station-managers (each with a staff of clerks and other officials), twenty-four overseers, and an engineer company with four officers, 200 men, and sixty horses. Several railway bridges, which had been partially blown up by the French, were temporarily repaired by the Railway Detachments. It is a singular fact that during the war some railway carriages belonging to the Austrian Government were employed for belligerent purposes by the Bavarian authorities. The Austrian Minister of Commerce, probably fearing for the neutrality of the Empire, entreated that they might be returned as speedily as possible; but the Bavarian Minister of Commerce replied that the matter belonged to the War Department, and that the exigencies of the time had caused the detention of the carriages. They happened to be on Bavarian territory when hostilities broke out, and all the rolling-stock which could be turned to account was at once seized for the transport of troops and provisions.

The food riots which broke out at Granville in the month of October were renewed in the course of December. Some mistletoe—of which large quantities are commonly sent from Normandy to Jersey at the advent of Christmas—was being shipped on board one of the London and South-Western Company's steam-packets, when a mob of people objected to its being sent away, on the ground that, although it was not among the articles prohibited for exportation, it would nevertheless serve as fodder for sheep, and therefore should be retained in the country. The rioters seized on several of the goods about to be shipped, stoned the crew, destroyed a good deal of property in the harbour, and forced the vessel to put to sea with only a small part of its cargo. The Mayor made no effort to restrain the mob, and a company of Mobile Guards, proceeding to the spot, suddenly wheeled round, and returned to the barracks. Proper protection, however, was afterwards afforded to the merchant-vessels; but these frequent riots showed how completely society was disorganised in France, and how difficult it was to maintain the slightest semblance of legality in the midst of such a weltering chaos.

CHAPTER V.

The Grand Duchy of Luxemburg—Prussian Complaints of Violation of Neutrality—Official Statements—History of the Duchy—A Delusive Guarantee—Protest of the Luxemburgers—Action of the Powers—Proposal to the King of Prussia for the Revival of the Imperial Title—Letter of the King of Bavaria—Position of Bavaria towards Prussia—Bill in the North German Parliament for Re-establishing the Empire—Address to the King—The New Federal Constitution—The King's Reply to the Address—Incidents of the Reception—Religious Service in the Chapel of Louis XIV.—Despatch of Count Bismarck—German Attack on the Garibaldians at Autun—The Attack Repulsed—Mismanagement of the Garibaldian Staff—Dissensions and Resignations—Retreat of the Germans—General Werder anxious as to his Communications—Movements of Bourbaki—Nuits taken by the Germans—Affair at Pesmes—The Germans evacuate Dijon, Gray, and Dôle—Sanguinary Riot at Lyons.

MORE than once during the progress of the war, it seemed as if the area of hostilities were about to be widely extended, and Europe were on the eve of a general convulsion. This was the case when Russia—apparently with the support of Prussia—gave notice of her intention to abrogate the Treaty of 1856, as far as the neutrality of the Black Sea was concerned; and before that question had quite ceased to be dangerous, another arose, which for a while looked equally formidable. The neutrality of the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg had all along been the cause of some uneasiness to the neutral Powers; and it now appeared probable that those Powers would be forced to choose between seeing the independence of the province set aside by Prussia, and fighting for its maintenance. On the 3rd of December Count Bismarck addressed a circular note to the European Governments parties to the Treaty of May, 1867, and also a communication to the Grand Ducal Government, intimating that Prussia would no longer consider herself bound by any considerations connected with the neutrality of Luxemburg. The reasons alleged in justification of this course were—that the inhabitants of Luxemburg had made manifestations of sympathy towards France, which had not been re-

pressed by the Government; that convoys of provisions destined for Germany had been sent from Luxemburg territory to Thionville, to provision the French garrison in that fortress, without any restraint or opposition on the part of the Government; that a large number of French officers and soldiers, who had effected their escape from Metz, had been allowed to pass through Luxemburg without impediment; and that a complete organisation existed in the Grand Duchy to aid the re-entry into France of French military fugitives. The neutrality of Luxemburg had therefore, in the view of Count Bismarck and his master, been broken, and Prussia reserved to herself the right of prosecuting her claims against the Grand Ducal Government for all damages entailed by this non-observance of neutrality, and of taking the necessary measures to secure herself against similar occurrences in the future.

The Prussian case was put more elaborately in an official communication to the *Nord Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, in which Europe was reminded that, on the outbreak of the war, Prussia, in compliance with the request of the Luxemburg Government, expressly declared, on the 17th of July, that she would respect the neutrality of the Grand Duchy as long as it was respected by France and maintained by Luxemburg itself. This promise, said the official statement, had been faithfully kept. Though it would have alleviated the sufferings of many of the German wounded to be sent home through the Luxemburg territory, the Berlin Government forbore to avail itself of this advantage, because France objected. Even the hostile acts and insults which German officials and travellers had to put up with from a portion of the Luxemburg population did not change the conduct of Prussia; and when the flagrant violation of neutrality, consisting of the despatch of provisions to Thionville, took place, she still refrained from retaliatory measures, and contented herself with complaining to the Government of the Grand Duchy, and pointing out the consequences which must ensue. "The excuse attempted," proceeds the official writer, "that the Eastern Railway, along which the provision trains ran, has for several years been worked by a French company, and that the Grand Ducal Government cannot, therefore, be held responsible for the doings on that railway, is no excuse at all. On the contrary, the fact of a French company working a Luxemburg railway ought, under the circumstances, to have prompted the Luxemburg Government to subject railway connection with France to the strictest supervision. Unless we had counted upon their recognising this duty, we should have destroyed the railway between Luxemburg and Thionville. Though expressing its regret at what had happened, the Grand Ducal Government took no effectual steps to prevent future infractions of neutrality, which became more frequent and glaring than ever." In other respects, the statement thus addressed to the German people followed that contained in the circulars of Count Bismarck. The policy now proclaimed by the Prussian Government involved a serious question for the consideration of England and the other Powers; for the Treaty of London, signed in May, 1867, had placed the neutrality of Luxemburg under the guarantee of Austria, France, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia. To put the whole case clearly before the reader, it will be necessary to go back some years, and describe the position of Luxemburg as regards both Germany and the European system in general.

Luxemburg is a small province, lying on the north-eastern frontier of France. It belonged to Austria down to the period of the first French Revolution. From 1795 to 1814 it was held by France; but in the latter year the sovereignty of the Duchy was vested by the Congress of Vienna in the King of the Netherlands, who thus became a member of the Germanic Confederation, and who governed Luxemburg as a province distinct from the rest of his dominions. The Kingdom of the Netherlands having, after the revolutionary movement of 1830, been divided into two separate States—Belgium and Holland—the Grand Duchy was apportioned between those countries, the King of Holland retaining his title of Grand Duke. This, however, did not take place until nine years later. During those years, the Duchy remained wholly with Belgium; but by the London Conference of 1839 the Dutch Sovereign received back a part of the province, and again entered the German Bund. Before the establishment of the Bund in 1815, a private arrangement was come to between the King of Prussia and the King of the Netherlands, by virtue of which the city of Luxemburg—one of the strongest fortresses in Europe—was garrisoned by Prussian troops; but this occupation seems to have been continued on the ground of Luxemburg being a member of the Germanic Confederation. It lasted up to 1867, when a threatening complication with France led to a new arrangement. In the spring of that year, Europe was startled by the statement that the Dutch Government, being hard pressed for money, had sold the province to France for the sum of four millions sterling. Some negotiations had undoubtedly taken place; and the Prussian people at once burst

into a fever of indignation and warlike enthusiasm. The French Emperor, in entering into these negotiations, seems to have been influenced by a desire to enhance the territorial dimensions and military strength of France, as a counterpoise to the excessive aggrandisement of Prussia in 1866, when he certainly lost in popularity with his own people in consequence of his tolerating that aggrandisement without obtaining any compensation for France. He would doubtless have been glad if he could have obtained the Duchy quietly; but the violent opposition in North Germany compelled him to relinquish his design, and to content himself with objecting to the continued occupation of the fortress of Luxemburg by Prussian troops, now that the destruction of the Germanic Confederation by Prussia herself, after the short war with Austria in 1866, had put an end to her technical right to garrison that stronghold. For a short time there was some prospect of war between the two countries, popular feeling running very high on both sides of the Rhine; but Bismarck, probably fearing that Germany was not yet fully prepared to encounter her rival, spoke in conciliatory language, and even admitted in Parliament that Luxemburg was an independent State, of which the King of Holland could dispose in the exercise of his sovereign rights, and upon his own responsibility. He likewise acknowledged as an indubitable fact that the inhabitants of the Duchy—though really of German blood—were disinclined to incorporation with Germany. Nevertheless, no sign was given of any intention to evacuate the fortress; and the Paris *Siècle* put the case in a nutshell, and with true French wit and point, when it remarked:—"Prussia says to Holland: 'Here is a house of which you are the sole proprietor. If I had formerly some right to occupy a part of it, I have none now. I openly admit that you are absolute master here, and that the treaty which authorised me to remain in the house with you is broken. Now that our respective positions have been so well defined, I shall shut myself up in the house, and shall not stir from it.'" Ultimately, the whole question, on the initiative of England, whose Foreign Minister at that time was Lord Stanley (afterwards Earl Derby), was submitted to a Conference of the Powers, which met in London in May, 1867, when an amicable arrangement was effected after a very few sittings.

The Treaty then signed was to the effect that the rights of the King of Holland over the Duchy should be affirmed; that Luxemburg should be perpetually neutral, under the guarantee of Austria, France, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia; that the city of Luxemburg should cease to be a fortified place; that the King of Prussia should withdraw his troops; that the King of Holland should demolish the fortress of Luxemburg, so far as to comply with the third stipulation; and that, as a consequence of the dissolution of the Germanic Confederation, the bonds uniting the Duchy of Limburg (another possession of the King of Holland) with the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg should be severed, and Limburg should thenceforward be regarded as a part of the Dutch monarchy. This agreement undoubtedly averted a war at the time; but the guarantee of the neutrality of Luxemburg was of the most delusive character. Lord Stanley explained in the House of Commons that the guarantee was a "collective" one, which, he added, was essentially different from a separate guarantee. "It was a case of limited liability," he assured the House, and had rather the character of a moral sanction than of a contingent liability to go to war. In the House of Lords, the Prime Minister, Earl Derby, was careful to impress upon the country that a collective guarantee gave no claim upon any one of the guaranteeing Powers taken singly, nor, if one of the contracting parties violated the neutrality, did it even give a claim upon the rest taken together. The guarantee, he emphatically stated, "depended on the union of *all* parties." Earl Russell, even while expressing his dissatisfaction with this view, was obliged to acknowledge that if France or Prussia violated the neutrality of Luxemburg, and the other called on the rest to enforce it, there might possibly not be a technical obligation to do so; but he thought there would be a moral obligation. Now, in these matters a merely moral obligation is equivalent to none at all, for nations have ceased to be Quixotic, if they ever were so; and it was therefore evident that the Treaty of London, as regarded its operation in the future, was a piece of waste paper. One of its objects was to protect Luxemburg against the possible aggression of either France or Prussia; yet the guarantee was given in such a way that the very fact of the aggression being committed rendered the surety inoperative. The knowledge that this was the case cannot but have encouraged Count Bismarck in the step he now determined upon taking.

The inhabitants of Luxemburg, in an address presented to the King of Holland, denied the justice of the German indictment. "The Government of the Confederation," they affirmed, "has been unworthily misled in its view of the conduct of the Luxemburg people. His Royal Highness Prince Henry of the Netherlands, the well-beloved

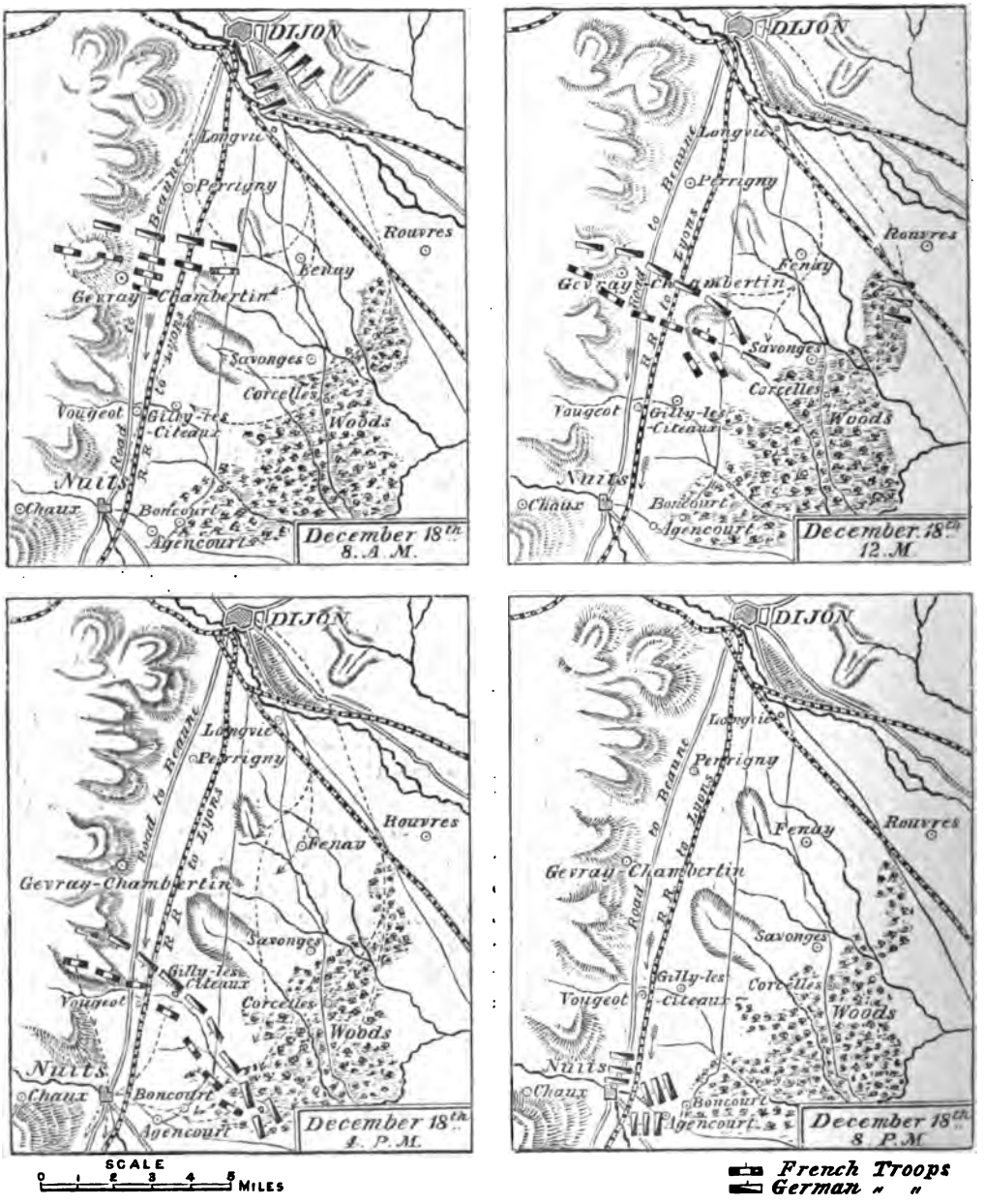
representative of your Majesty, has been a witness of the unceasing efforts made by our Government to uphold the neutrality which we enjoy. The neighbouring nations, Prussia, France, and Belgium, can distinctly testify that little Luxemburg has ever been first at the post of charity and benevolence; and all Europe can endorse the declaration made to your Majesty at this solemn moment by an unfortunate people which has no other means of defence than the sentiments of right, duty, and justice. Sire, our poor country is at this moment more menaced than at any other period of our history. It is in the midst of this supreme crisis that we come to entreat your Majesty to save Luxemburg, and never to allow its political existence to be disposed of without the free votes of its people." The King of Holland assured the Grand Ducal Government, of which he was the head, that he would defend the Treaty of 1867, and the honour and independence of the Duchy. He added that he approved all the acts of the Grand Ducal Government. The note containing these assurances was read by the Minister of State at the meeting of the Luxemburg Chamber on December 19th, and the Minister at the same time declared that all the grievances put forward by Count Bismarck were founded on false reports. When the Chamber again met on the 20th, the following order of the day was voted:—"The declaration of Germany, that the Federal Government no longer holds itself bound to respect the neutrality of the Grand Duchy in the execution of military operations, has produced a deep and painful impression in the country. The Chamber again proclaims the devoted attachment of the inhabitants of Luxemburg to the dynasty and to the institutions of the country, and its members entertain feelings of the deepest gratitude for the devotion which the Grand Duke and Prince Henry have displayed in defending the rights and interests of the Duchy." A patriotic committee was formed, which presented to Prince Henry a national petition of the Luxemburgers, signed by 44,869 persons. After a speech from the President of the Committee, Prince Henry made a reply, in which he said:—"I am convinced that these important manifestations will facilitate our task, and that we shall be then enabled to defend the rights of the faithful Duchy, and prove to foreigners that the loyal Luxemburgers, with the Grand Duke at their head, have confidence in the justice of their cause and in the loyalty of the Powers who signed the Treaty of 1867."

Russia, of course, supported the Prussian view of the matter, as a friendly return for the countenance given by Prussia to herself in regard to the Black Sea question; and England, while expressing a hope that Germany would not entirely renounce the Treaty of London, and would consult the other Powers with a view to arriving at a pacific solution, adopted, on the whole, a manner which clearly intimated that no active opposition need be feared by the Berlin Government from the Court of St. James. Subsequently Count Bismarck gave some mollifying assurances; while the Prussian monarch, in a letter to Prince Henry of Luxemburg, advised the people of the Duchy to be prudent and cautious, and averred that Prussia never intended to attack their independence. In this way the affair blew over.

Prussia could indeed afford, after a little while, to disregard Luxemburg and all the questions connected with it. Her armies were adding victory to victory, and her monarch was now openly designated as German Emperor. The union of the several German States in a common Federal Constitution, which was effected during the autumn, has already been described;* but at first nothing was said about conferring on King William the title of Emperor, though of course it was always understood that the leadership of the new Federation was to be with him. Early in December, however, the King of Bavaria sent to his Royal brother of Berlin a letter reviewing the situation, and proposing the revival of the Imperial style. "After the adhesion of Southern Germany to the German Constitutional Alliance," wrote King Ludwig, "the Presidential rights vested in your Majesty will extend over all German States. In consenting to those rights being vested in a single hand, I have been influenced by the conviction that the interests of the whole German Fatherland and its allied sovereigns will be effectually promoted by this arrangement. I trust that the rights constitutionally possessed by the President of the Confederacy will, by the restoration of the German Empire and the German Imperial dignity, be recognised as rights exercised by your Majesty in the name of the entire Fatherland, and by virtue of the agreement effected between its Princes. I have therefore proposed to the German Sovereigns, conjointly with myself, to suggest to your Majesty that the possession of the presidential rights of the Confederacy be coupled with the Imperial title. As soon as I have been informed of the resolutions of your Majesty and the allied princes, I shall direct my Government to take steps to effect a formal agreement on

* Vol. I., pp. 437—8.

the subject." The Bavarian monarch had previously addressed the King of Saxony and the other German Princes on the same topic, and had urged them to join him in persuading the King of Prussia to accept the title and the powers of Emperor. "It is for me," he fervently exclaimed, "a sublime thought that I can feel myself called upon, both by my position in Germany and by the history of my country, to take the first step towards crowning the work of German unity." Strange to say, however, it was from Bavaria that the chief opposition to the new Federal scheme had proceeded. Bavaria is Catholic, while Prussia is ultra-Protestant, with a considerable admixture of the free-thinking element. This consideration may have influenced the people, if not the monarch, of the former State; and another deterrent sentiment was the national dislike to merging the Bavarian army, in all but the name, in that of Prussia. Nevertheless, King Ludwig



PLANS OF THE BATTLE OF NUITS.



KING WILLIAM PROCLAIMED GERMAN EMPEROR.

had the acuteness to perceive that there was no use in struggling with the inevitable. His only chance of saving himself from absolute annihilation as a monarch consisted in his exhibiting alacrity in furthering the designs of one who held his fate in the hollow of his hand. He had opposed King William in 1866, and had narrowly escaped the destiny of the King of Hanover; he had now thrown in his lot with the victor of Sadowa, and he determined to do whatever might be expected of him. But this was not at all from willingness; it was simply from necessity. The real feelings and actual motives of Bavaria were very frankly expressed in the Chamber at Munich by the Minister of Justice, who in plain language stated that Bavaria had been "forced" to make the experiment of a reconstruction of Germany. This compulsion, he said, had not been effected directly by Prussia; but Bavaria had been obliged to enter into negotiations with the North German Bund because, even if she had not, Würtemberg, Baden, and Hesse would; and in that case a tolerable existence would have been impossible for her. The Minister assured the House, from his own official experience, that the longer Bavaria postponed her union with Prussia, the harder would be the conditions on which that union would ultimately be effected. "The proposals made by Prussia to the South German States in 1866," he continued, "were much more liberal than those afterwards made by the North German Bund; and even the latter would have given Bavaria a much more favourable position than that which she is now compelled to accept." This was said after the letters written by King Ludwig to the German Princes and to the King of Prussia.

The new Dictator was less modest than Julius Cæsar or Oliver Cromwell. They, again and again, and to the last, refused the higher dignity that was offered them. The King of Prussia, who had indeed exhibited some coyness with regard to the Imperial title at an earlier period of the war, now at once accepted the proffered honour. On the 8th of December, the King of Saxony acceded to the proposal of the King of Bavaria, that the title of Emperor should be combined with the exercise of the prerogative right of the Presidency. On the 9th, the Prussian Diet received a communication from Count Bismarck, stating that the Federal Council, in accordance with the South German States, had determined to substitute in the text of the German Constitution the words "German Empire" for German Confederation, and to alter Article 11 of the said Constitution thus:—"The Presidency of the Confederation belongs to the King of Prussia, who assumes the title of German Emperor." At the sitting of the North German Parliament on the 10th of December, a Bill determining the amendments of the constitution necessitated by the introduction of the words "Empire" and "Emperor" was passed through all its stages with the utmost rapidity. The final vote was 188 ayes against 6 noes. The minority was composed of the Social Democrats, who also voted against an address to the King, but of course quite ineffectually. This address said:—

"Most illustrious and most mighty King! Most gracious King and Master!—At the call of your Majesty, the people has rallied around its leader, and heroically defends on foreign soil the Fatherland, which had been wantonly challenged. The war demands immeasurable sacrifices, but the deep grief at the loss of her brave sons does not shake the determined resolution of the nation, who will not lay aside her arms till peace is assured by secure and better-protected frontiers against the recurring attacks of her jealous neighbour. Thanks to the victories to which your Majesty has led the armies of Germany in faithful companionship of arms, the nation looks forward to an enduring unity.

"The North German Parliament, in unison with the Princes of Germany, approaches with the prayer that your Majesty will deign to consecrate the work of unification by accepting the Imperial Crown of Germany. The Teutonic Crown on the head of your Majesty will inaugurate, for the re-established Empire of the German nation, an era of power, of peace, of well-being, and of liberty, secured under the protection of the laws.

"The Fatherland thanks its leader and the glorious army, at the head of which your Majesty still dwells on victorious battle-fields. The devotion and the deeds of its sons will be remembered for ever. May it soon be vouchsafed that the Emperor, crowned with glory, shall restore peace to the nation. United Germany has proved itself mighty and victorious in war under the leadership of its supreme Commander; the United German Empire will be mighty and peace-loving under its Emperor."

By the amended constitution it is provided that the Emperor is to represent the nation, conclude treaties, and accredit as well as receive envoys. With him rests the right of declaring war in the name of the Confederacy; but, unless when the national territory is attacked, he cannot enter into warlike operations without the consent of the Federal Council—an addition to the charter of 1866, now inserted at the instance of Bavaria. The armies of the several States were practically placed at the disposal of Prussia, though retaining a certain pretence of independence. The various monarchies were still to keep up diplomatic relations with foreign courts; but it was clear that they

would always be subordinate to the Federal Ambassador—in other words, to the nominee of Prussia. As regards internal affairs, the Constitution is characterised by all those divisions of power between the Federal Legislature and the local Parliaments which form the peculiar weakness of Federal Governments. The new condition of things in Germany has the inherent vice of destroying the independence of the minor States sufficiently to mortify their self-love, while it fails to establish that absolute unity which can alone create and satisfy a broader and deeper national sentiment. It is impossible not to see at a glance how much more satisfactory in this respect has been the work of Italy than the work of Germany. In the former country a real organic fusion has been effected; in the latter we see only a precarious partnership, with one predominating partner, and a hundred opportunities for dissension and ill-will.

The address of the German Parliament was presented to the King at Versailles by Herr Simson, who, as Speaker of the Frankfort Parliament in 1848, made this identical proposal to the then King of Prussia, brother of the present monarch. He then met with a refusal; and it was a singular fact that, after so many years, the same man (now President of the Federal Legislature) should once more be the bearer of the same offer, the acceptance of which, this time, was known beforehand. The address was presented on Sunday, December 18th. King William replied as follows:—

"Gentlemen,—In receiving you here on foreign territory, far from the German frontier, the irresistible prompting of my feelings is to express my gratitude to Providence, whose wonderful dispensation has brought us together in this old French Royal residence. God has given us victory in a measure for which I had hardly dared to hope and to ask when, in the summer of the year, I first claimed your support for this great war. This support has been given to the fullest extent, and I thank you in my own name, in that of the army, and in that of the country.

"The victorious German armies, among which you have sought me, have found in the self-sacrificing spirit of the country, in the loyal sympathy and ministering care of the people at home, and in its unanimity with the army, that encouragement which has supported them in the midst of battles and privations. The grant of means for the continuation of the war, which the Governments of the North German Confederation have asked for in the session of the Diet that is just concluded, has given me a new proof that the nation is determined to exert all its energies to secure that the great and painful sacrifices, which touch my heart as they do yours, shall not have been made in vain, and that it will not lay aside its arms until the German frontier shall have been secured against future attacks.

"The North German Diet, whose greetings and congratulations you bring me, has been called upon before its close to co-operate by its decision in the work of the unification of Germany. I feel grateful to it for the readiness with which it has almost unanimously pronounced its assent to the treaties which will give an organic expression to the unity of the nation. The Diet, like the allied Governments, has assented to these treaties in the conviction that the common political life of the Germans will develope itself with the more beneficial results, inasmuch as the basis which has been obtained for it has been measured and offered by our South German allies of their own free choice, and in agreement with their own estimate of the national requirements. I hope that the representative assemblies of those States before which the treaties have still to be laid will follow the Government in the same path.

"The summons addressed to me by his Majesty the King of Bavaria for re-establishing the Imperial dignity of the ancient German Empire has moved me deeply. You, gentlemen, request me, in the name of the North German Diet, not to shrink from responding to this summons. I am glad to gather from your words the expression of the confidence and the wishes of the North German Diet; but you are aware that in this question, touching such high interests and grand recollections of the German nation, it is not my own feelings, not even my own judgment, which can determine the decision. It is only in the unanimous voice of the German Princes and Free Towns, and the corresponding wish of the German nation and its representatives, that I can recognise that call of Providence which I can obey, with trust in God's blessing. It will be a source of satisfaction to you, as well as to myself, to know that I have received intelligence from his Majesty the King of Bavaria that the assent of all the German Princes and Free Towns is secured, and that the official ratification may be shortly expected."

The deputation of the North German Parliament was received by King William in the great drawing-room of the Prefecture at Versailles. His Majesty was in full uniform, and covered with decorations. He stood before the fire, and immediately to his right was the Crown Prince, while the Princes of Weimar, Mecklenburg, Würtemberg, and Hohenzollern were ranged a little farther back, though also to the right. To the left was the reigning Duke of Coburg, with Bismarck close behind him; and forming a circle in front were the officers in attendance, and the members of the deputation, amongst the latter of whom was Baron Rothschild of Frankfort. The voice of the King, while reading his reply to the address, trembled with emotion; and certainly it was one of those great historical occasions which concentrate within a few minutes whole ages of thought, feeling, aspi-

ration, hope, and doubt. Dr. Russell, describing the scene in the *Times*, gave a few touches which help us to realise the impressive ceremonial. A new Royal standard of purple silk, with a white-bordered cross and a golden crown, hung over the Prefecture, and attracted the gaze of a large number of the townspeople. "And so King William is to be made an Emperor," said one of the sight-seers. "What good will that do him?" "Bah!" exclaimed another, "I wish the Germans joy. *We* tried Emperors, and a pretty pass they brought France to!" A third wondered that the Germans did not take example by French experience, and anticipated that their fate would be similar. There was of course a large amount of military display, both outside and inside the building; and in the room itself the scene was grand and affecting. Many of the veteran generals who stood round the King sobbed with joy as his Majesty, in faltering tones, which he laboured to control, read the reply to the deputation; and when, shortly afterwards, some of the spectators appeared on the external steps of the Prefecture, tears were in their eyes and on their cheeks. "And now," exclaimed one officer, "it is done! Old Barbarossa may go to sleep." The allusion was to the legend of the German Emperor, Frederick I. (sometimes called Barbarossa), who was said, after his apparent death about the close of the twelfth century, to have been conveyed to a subterranean castle, where, at long intervals of time, he awakes from an enchanted sleep, and inquires as to the progress of Germany, which, after the lapse of ages, is to be reunited under his sceptre. In the view of the patriotic officer, King William of Prussia was the representative of old Barbarossa, and the mediæval monarch might now finally go to sleep, his great task being fully accomplished. Another officer, old and scarred, ejaculated, "It is God's work, and I can sing *Nunc dimittis*." When the ceremonial in the drawing-room was over, the King walked up to the Parliamentary deputies, and shook hands with several. It was indeed a great day for all concerned, and it healed, for a time at least, the dissensions between Monarch and Legislative Assembly which had created so much agitation in Prussia for several years. The charm of military success is irresistible, even to the most phlegmatic nations. Germany had triumphed in a brilliant and almost unexampled way, and the steps by which success had been reached were willingly forgotten in the splendour of the result.

Previous to the reception of the address there had been a religious service in the Chapel of Louis XIV. attached to the palace of Versailles. The King arrived at ten o'clock in the morning, and was soon followed by Princes, Grand Dukes, and other notables. The aisles and galleries were filled with private soldiers, and in the centre passage between the rows of seats stood Dr. Simson, whose massive head and large, full face reminded Dr. Russell of the portraits of Charles James Fox, though the features were more regular and handsome. The type of countenance presented by this remarkable man is described by the same observer as almost Oriental. The thick black eyebrows and dark, bright eye contrast powerfully with the white hair; and Dr. Simson is a man marked out by Nature to attract attention in a crowd. The chapel was sumptuously adorned, and eight long tapers burnt on the altar. When the doors were thrown open, the King appeared draped in a military cloak.

"His Majesty (says Dr. Russell) walked with quick, firm strides up the centre, and took his place in a high-backed chair on the right, facing the altar. He was alone, and for some seconds his Staff remained behind, and then came in and sat behind the King; the Prince Carl, Prince Adalbert, the Duke of Baden, and the young Prince of Bavaria, being near, and on his right. The Crown Prince arrived two minutes later, and took his chair on the left-hand side, facing the altar, and the Generals and Staff, members of the Delegation, and officers, soon filled the vacant places. Among them, Count Bismarck was conspicuous by his absence. General von Roon, General von Moltke, General von Podbielski, Count Perponcher, General von Blumenthal, Colonel von Gottberg, Count Eulenberg, Count Schleinitz, Prince Lynar, the Russian General de Guern, and many a stout captain and subtle councillor, were there, as well as the rank and file officers who are the representatives of the nameless legions whose hands have helped to dig out the Crown of Barbarossa from its hiding-place—the muscles and nerves which do the bidding of the brain. The King-Emperor, who has not entered Paris yet, has twice visited it with conquering armies—in 1814 and 1815—when it was almost an open city, and when the French army, defeated outside its walls, could find no rallying-point; and it may well be imagined that the Imperial Crown seems to him not quite his own as yet. When all were assembled, the doors were closed, and the band in the gallery played one of the noble hymns of the military service. The preacher entered—the brother-in-law of von Roon—a man who bore some resemblance to Martin Luther's portraiture, dressed in a plain black cassock, with bands; and, turning towards the altar, he prayed for a moment before he began the simple service, without any assistants or clerks, the congregation joined in the rare responses and in the hymns, in which the band assisted with voice and instrument. The sermon which followed was very appropriate and eloquent; but it is difficult to fill the chapel even with the best-modulated tones, and the effect of the dis-

course was somewhat impaired. The preacher alluded to the season of the year, in which the near approach of a sacred festival filled all German hearts with thoughts of home. But they had no need to go to Germany to seek Him whose hand had led them through so many perils. The Lord was there, and His power dwelt among them. Here, in the city where they were about to consummate the work which realised the aspirations of toiling millions, and in which the voice of the German people was raised to offer to the leader of their armies the Crown which was the emblem of their union, had been concocted those treaties which were meant to disintegrate and ruin the national life of Germany. They were assembled in the city in which were devised the Treaties of Utrecht, of Ryswick, and of Nimeguen. Let them recognise in these things the workings of the Divine will, and let them bow the knee in gratitude and praise."

The formal notification of assent to the King's assumption of the Imperial dignity had yet to be received from the minor German States; but this was a foregone conclusion, and the unification of Germany dates from that 18th of December, and from the solemn ceremonial at the Prefecture of Versailles.

The position of the new Confederation towards the Austro-Hungarian Empire was explained by Bismarck in a despatch addressed to Herr Schweinitz, the North German Ambassador at Vienna. He said :—

"The treaties which, as your Excellency knows, have been arranged by the North German Confederation with the South German States, and which have been signed here at Versailles by Bavaria, Baden, and Hesse, and at Berlin by Würtemberg, have, by the recent proceedings at Berlin, when all these States mutually announced their adhesion, so far advanced to a conclusion that they can now be submitted to the South German Chambers. Not only a regard for the Treaty of Prague, by which Prussia and Austro-Hungary came to an understanding as to their mutual views of the then expected shape of German relations, but also a desire to cultivate with this powerful and friendly neighbouring State relations which would be in accordance with the past and with the sentiments and requirements of both nations, induce me to explain to the Imperial Austro-Hungarian Government the stand-point which the Government of his Majesty the King is now occupying in connection with the reorganisation of Germany. In the treaty concluded on the 27th of August, 1866, expression is given to the anticipation that the German Governments south of the Maine would unite in a Confederacy which, apart from its own independent position, would also enter into closer national bonds with the North German Confederation. The realisation of this anticipation was left to those Governments, as neither of the contracting parties could be justified in prescribing, or be bound by the treaty to prescribe, to the independent South German States the nature of their future relations to each other. The South German States have on their part failed to realise the aspirations shadowed forth in the Treaty of Prague. They have simply endeavoured to effect the anticipated national closer relations with North Germany by means of the Zollverein and other mutual covenants. That these arrangements should result in the present treaties, and in the constitution of a new German Federation through the sheer force of national sentiment evoked by an unexpected French attack, lay beyond the scope of human calculation. It could not be expected that North Germany should restrain or discountenance this development, which was not brought about by us, but the roots of which lay in the history and the spirit of the German people. Nor does the Imperial Government of Austria, as we well know from the reports of your Excellency, expect or demand that the stipulations of the Treaty of Prague should retard the development of the German neighbouring States. The Imperial Government will look forward to the new state of things in Germany with the full confidence that all members of the New German Bund, and especially the King my august master, are animated by the desire to maintain and to foster such friendly relations between Germany and the neighbouring Austro-Hungarian State as are necessary for their common interests and their mutual spiritual and material intercourse. The Confederate Governments, on their part, are confident that this desire is shared by the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. The impending realisation of the national aspirations and requirements of the German people will give to the further development of Germany a stability and a security which may be hailed by all Europe, and especially by the countries adjacent to Germany, not only without anxiety, but with satisfaction. The unfettered development of material interests, connecting the countries and peoples by manifold ties, cannot but react beneficially on our political relations. We may confidently hope that Germany and Austro-Hungary will look upon each other with sentiments of mutual goodwill, and go hand-in-hand in promoting the well-being and prosperity of both countries."

It is now time to return to Garibaldi, who, after his defeat in the neighbourhood of Dijon towards the end of November, was himself attacked at Autun on the 1st of December. A single brigade (Keller's) was sent on the track of the retreating patriots when they moved towards the south. The object of the Germans, judging by their own account, was to ascertain, by an inroad on the base of operations of the enemy, the resources of the Garibaldian corps, its relations with the regular French troops and with the population, &c. It was also hoped to surprise the great guerilla chief at his head-quarters. Autun was attacked by Keller's brigade with some energy. The German artillery poured a brisk fire into the

place, while the infantry, wading through a deep brook, advanced close to the town. Here they met with a vigorous resistance, and the men were suddenly exposed to a flank attack of several battalions advancing from Châlons. The Garibaldians, according to the Germans, were in possession of six or eight guns. The infantry of the attacking force then retired to their rendezvous-position on the Dijon and Autun roads, from



MOVING INTO PARIS FROM THE SUBURBS.

which point they afterwards advanced on the village of St. Pantaléon, and occupied it. This village immediately abuts on Autun, and its possession gave the Germans a certain advantage; but in a little while it was found desirable to continue the retreat, and the brigade made its way to Dracy St. Loup. The *Daily News* correspondent with Garibaldi, who of course represented the French side of the matter, said that about the middle of the day he saw the shopkeepers of Autun hastily putting up their shutters, and heard them shouting "The Prussians! the Prussians! the Prussians!" To the correspondent it seemed almost impossible that the Germans should be upon them, as, a few minutes before, he had been up to some high ground, and had seen no sign of an enemy. In a very little while, however, the roar of cannon was heard. It was now a little after two o'clock. "The Prussian battery," says the *Daily News* correspondent, "was at St. Martin, four kilomètres from here. Shortly after their battery opened fire, they began to throw a few shells, without, however, doing much damage, probably because they were small. I returned to the lower part of the town at about a quarter to three P.M., and found our battery at the Petit Séminaire working in fine style. A great many men had been killed and wounded, and one or two ammunition-wagons had been dismounted, but the cannons had not suffered. At about half-past three, the Prussian battery was almost completely silenced, but they continued to throw a few shells, which knocked the roofs of the houses about a little. Our battery continued firing until dark, without obtaining any response from the enemy. At six P.M. we dined, after a deal of trouble, for there was little food in the place. After dinner a few shells fell near our hotel. At eight o'clock I went to bed, or rather lay down, for it would have been ridiculous to



SKIRMISH NEAR AUTUN.

think of undressing. Our horses remained saddled and bridled all night. The manner in which we allowed ourselves to be surprised is almost incomprehensible; the more so as we knew that the Germans were between Arnay and here. When the enemy began firing, the soldiers were dispersed all over the town, the officers were in the *cafés*, and only one or two men guarded the artillery." According to the same authority, the Germans might have gained a brilliant victory had they possessed a shadow of their reputed courage. He must of course be understood as confining his remark to that particular body of Germans, for of their courage generally there can assuredly be no doubt. Keller's men, it seems, got within a kilomètre of the town, at which distance they planted two batteries. Colonel Canzio estimated their numbers at 5,000, with sixty pieces of cannon. He seems, however, to have over-stated the amount of the artillery, for it was agreed on all hands that only two batteries were brought into action. "If," says the *Daily News* correspondent, "instead of attacking us on the north-east side of the town, the Germans had attacked us on the north, between the Faubourg of St. Jean-le-Grand and the railway station, they might have entered Autun without firing a shot, for in that direction there was not a single soldier." Garibaldi was afterwards so sensible of the weakness of his position in that quarter that he constructed five barricades along the road leading into Autun on the northern side, planted six pieces of cannon in battery, and stationed sentinels at a distance of four kilomètres from the Porte d'Arroux. When the action of the 1st began, Garibaldi and three or four officers were standing on the hill to the south of Autun, beside the ruins of the pyramid of Couard, looking out for the enemy with telescopes and field-glasses, when suddenly the general beheld, with the naked eye, immediately below him, a body of Germans quietly placing two pieces of cannon in battery in front of the convent of St. Martin, situated within two-thirds of a mile north-east of Autun. He immediately descended into the town, and gave orders that scouts should be sent forth, and sentinels and troops posted at various parts of the plain. These directions were very imperfectly executed, and the fault, in the opinion of the writer to whom allusion has already been made, rested entirely with the General Staff or Etat-Major, Garibaldi having taken all necessary measures for defending the place.

The affair, thus nearly ending in a disaster, led to some troublesome complications. On the 2nd of December, Colonel Canzio tendered his resignation, on the ground that he could not serve with men incapable of discharging their duties. All the other principal Italian officers followed his example. For some time past there had been two parties in the camp—one which stood by Colonel Frapoli, and another which supported Colonel Bordone, who, in spite of his Italian name, is said to be a Frenchman. Colonel Frapoli was at one time at the head of the General Staff for a few days; but he was obliged to resign, and was succeeded by Colonel Bordone, who seems to have had the special support of Garibaldi, though the Italian party generally tried hard to get him removed. If the account we have been following be correct in all its details, Bordone was to blame for the mismanagement on the 1st; yet Garibaldi continued to give him his countenance. This led to a great deal of dissension, and even on one occasion to a slight riot, which was followed by the dismissal of a friend of Colonel Frapoli. The men of the Vosges Army were always in difficulties with some one or other. They offended the peasantry and the priests; they quarrelled among themselves; they were constantly at issue with the Tours or Bordeaux Delegation. It is said by the friends of Garibaldi that he was perpetually thwarted by the Ministers, who were afraid that, if he achieved any very remarkable success, it would hurt the self-love of Frenchmen to owe so much to a foreigner. After Garibaldi had strongly fortified Autun, the French authorities sent a certain Captain Pradier (calling himself a general) to inspect the works, which he is stated to have done in a very offensive and blustering manner.

The Germans had undoubtedly received a check at Autun; but, according to invariable custom, they endeavoured to make out that all was well in that direction. A person who left Orleans shortly after the encounter just described, and who proceeded to Autun, affirmed that the walls of the former city were placarded with an announcement, signed by General Werder, to the effect that Garibaldi and his whole army had been defeated by the Prussians, and forced to retire into Switzerland.* This may have been very well for imposing on the German forces that were *not* at Autun; but those on the spot saw the necessity of getting away as quickly as they could. On the 3rd of December their retreat was impeded at Châteauneuf, the wooded heights near which were occupied by hostile columns, appearing to arrive from the west. A contest ensued, in which the German infantry, actively supported by the artillery, stormed the

* *Daily News* Correspondent with the Garibaldian Army.

hills, and dislodged the opposing force, so that the brigade was enabled to continue its march. A German account spoke of this affair as one of the most brilliant exploits of the campaign; but it acknowledged that there were many painful losses. On the 16th, the French, stationed in a strong position near Longeau, were attacked by General Goltz, and, after a fight of three hours' duration, were driven back into the fortress, with considerable loss in men and arms. About the same time, the neighbouring fortress of Langres, in the department of the Haute Marne, was invested, with a view to putting a stop to the operations of the Francs-tireurs in that quarter; and a few days later the French were defeated, and forced to retreat towards the north. The invaders needed some consolation in this part of France; for Garibaldi, despite his defeat at Dijon, was certainly giving them trouble. After their discomfiture at Châtillon-sur-Seine, where Ricciotti Garibaldi surprised the occupying force on the 19th of November, they left a garrison of 1,200 men in the place. These were encamped at the railway station, and two hundred inhabitants of the town were detained as hostages. The exasperation against the Prussians, prevalent in the neighbourhood of Châtillon, was very great, and the garrison felt somewhat uneasy after their recent experience. General Werder, who had the command of the German army opposed to Garibaldi, became increasingly doubtful as to the safety of his communications, and found it necessary to abandon his original design of marching to attack the Army of Lyons. In the great manufacturing city it was acknowledged that but for Garibaldi the Germans would have been in that quarter for some time. Werder was threatened on every side by detachments of the enemy, and by the hostility of the whole population; and he at length determined to evacuate Dijon, and retreat in a north-easterly direction. He was mainly influenced to take this step by fear of the movements of Bourbaki, who, some time previous to Christmas, left Bourges with the Eighteenth and Twentieth Corps (called by M. Gambetta sometimes the First and sometimes the Second Army of the Loire), and proceeded towards the valley of the Rhône, in order, as it would seem, to fall upon Werder, destroy the German communications between Paris and Strasburg, and relieve the garrison of Belfort. Werder appears to have had some knowledge of this movement, and to have thought it necessary to provide for his own safety. Before retiring, however, he made a vigorous and successful attack on Nuits, a town in the department of the Côte d'Or; which he was the better enabled to do, as he had recently been strongly reinforced with fresh troops from Germany.

The assault on Nuits took place on the 18th of December. The town is situated a little to the south-west of Dijon, and the object of the attack was to dislodge the French from the defensive line which they had pushed northwards from Beaune as far as Nuits. In the early part of November, Werder's advanced guard had been stationed for a short time at Nuits, but, owing to the partial successes of the Garibaldians, it had evacuated the place. It was now thought prudent to dispossess the French before the Germans commenced their retreat. Accordingly, General Glümer, at the head of two brigades of Baden troops, marched against Nuits, and found it occupied by considerable hostile forces. After an obstinate engagement, which lasted five hours, the town and military station were stormed, and the garrison driven out. The French lost many officers, and more than 1,000 men, besides a large depôt of rifles and ammunition, four gun-carriages, three ammunition-wagons, and numerous miscellaneous arms and accoutrements. But the Germans lost heavily too. They had, according to their own accounts, "to drive an obstinate and well-armed enemy from a naturally strong position." Fifty-four officers and 880 men killed and wounded formed a serious drawback from their success. Between the railway and the Nuits road the ground was thickly covered with corpses; the houses were filled with groaning sufferers; and General Glümer himself, and Prince William of Baden, were both slightly wounded. It being no part of the German plan to hold Nuits, which was unfavourably situated close to the steep declivities of the Côte d'Or, the town was evacuated on the 19th, after it had been ascertained that the enemy had entirely withdrawn from the neighbourhood.

At the same time, another sharp affair took place at Pesmes. On the 16th of December, a Landwehr company was ordered to go with some pioneers to that town, to effect the blowing up of a bridge over the Ognon. The passage of the river, however, was so stoutly defended by two French battalions that the Germans were obliged to abandon their enterprise for that day. On the 17th the attempt was recommenced with a much larger force, consisting of seven companies of the 25th Regiment, a reserve Uhlan troop, and a heavy battery. One of the Uhlans was fired on at Pesmes; but, a few grenades having been thrown into the town in reply, the French withdrew to the other side of the stream. The detachment then occupied Pesmes, and a portion, crossing the river, engaged the

enemy in the villages and woods, forcing him to retreat with some loss. On the afternoon of the 18th, the German outposts on the left bank of the Ognon were attacked in force; but the French were ultimately driven back, after losing several men, including their commander. The Germans remained one day at Pesmes; and on the 20th, after the blowing up of the bridge had been accomplished, they left their temporary positions.

The evacuation of Dijon was on the 27th of December, and the Germans, by forced marches, reached the vicinity of Vesoul on the 29th. When they entered Dijon two months before, the invaders ordered the town to deposit £20,000 as security; but, at the entreaty of the Mayor, who described the distressed condition of the working population, the amount was reduced to £12,000. This sum was returned to the Mayor by General Werder on his departure, with a letter complimenting the inhabitants on their excellent conduct. Bourbaki had by this time reinforced the French in the neighbourhood of Nuits, and Werder was glad to get farther away to the north. In the closing days of the year, Gray and Dôle were also evacuated by the Germans and occupied by the French. During the retreat, some encounters took place between Werder's troops and the pursuing forces, in which the former seem to have been worsted, though probably not to the extent alleged by the French authorities.

The defeat of the French at Nuits led to some riots at Lyons, a city always inclined to turbulence on the slightest provocation. On hearing of the affair in question, the populace became greatly excited, and the women in particular were agitated by a report that two battalions of the National Guards of the city had been entirely destroyed. A public meeting was held on the evening of the 19th in the Salle Valentino, at which a great many inflammatory speeches, of the Red Republican type, were delivered, and Cluseret and Garibaldi were declared to be the only great generals of the day, the only two who were not traitors, and the only men fit to be named commanders-in-chief. It was ultimately resolved to appoint fifteen delegates in each arrondissement, to call out the National Guards of their respective quarters, to meet in arms on the Place des Terreaux, and generally to organise an insurrection. Another meeting took place on the following morning, when several women, dressed in black, and carrying red and black flags, formed part of the mob. On Commandant Arnaud, of the 12th Battalion of the National Guards—a very decided Republican—arriving at the Salle Valentino, he was refused admittance to the hall, and was afterwards hustled, struck, and treated with so much violence that his sword was broken. He then drew a revolver, and fired twice or thrice, without injuring any one, but was overpowered, tried at once by the rabble in a low wine-shop, condemned to death, taken off a short distance, and shot by a party of National Guards. According to some accounts, his offence consisted in his refusal to have the rappel beaten, and to march with his troops on the Hôtel de Ville, in order to proceed summarily with the execution of all the civic functionaries. The women, it is said, treated him with excessive barbarity; but Arnaud preserved his composure. When made to understand that his execution had been determined on, he took off his képi and tunic, shouted "Long live the Republic! Long live Garibaldi!" and himself gave the word "Fire!" Just before the catastrophe, some of the mob, perhaps dreading the consequences, raised a cry of "pardon;" but it was not heeded. The volley did not instantly kill Arnaud. He writhed on the ground, with a rattle in his throat, and a youth of sixteen rushed forward with a revolver; but the dying man still had strength enough to thrust aside the boy's arm. Three rifles were then fired close to the sufferer's head, and all was over. The horrible scene being ended, the body was taken to the Mairie, and the assassins, with a hideous affectation of judicial impassiveness, sent to inform Madame Arnaud of what had occurred. Another demonstration was held later in the day, but was dispersed. One account says that nobody interfered to prevent the crime, although, as the mob were leading their victim to death, they passed before a numerous guard mounted at the Croix Rousse Mairie. The isolated efforts of a few persons who endeavoured to interfere were repelled by threats and violence; and a number of spectators, women, children, and men, who seemed paralysed by terror, followed the assassins and furies who hurried Arnaud to his fate. He was about forty-five years old, and left several children. In consequence of this tragical affair, several arrests were made; but nothing could suppress that spirit of savage lawlessness which seems inherent in some of the populations of France, and which the perpetual recurrence of revolutions fosters and stimulates to a monstrous growth. That the murdered man was himself a Republican, was no protection to him against the ferocity of these fanatics. He had dared to disobey the sanguinary orders of a mob; and he at once passed into the category of Legitimists and Imperialists, and paid the penalty of his honesty with his life.

CHAPTER VI.

Another Sortie from Paris determined on—Movements of Faidherbe in the North—Despatch of M. Gambetta to the Paris Government—A Sortie insisted on by Public Opinion—Official Announcement—State of the Paris Army—Commencement of the Sortie of December 21st—Attack on Le Bourget—Incidents of the Struggle—The French Driven out—Sortie against Stains—Attack on Chelles—Fighting at Maison Blanche and Ville-Evrard—Minor Sorties—The Fire of Mont Avron—State of Affairs at the Close of the Day—Field Entrenchments—Further Operations on the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th of December—Sufferings of the Troops from the Severe Cold—Monseigneur Bauer at St. Denis—German Sailors at Versailles—Career of General Faidherbe—The Battle of Pont-Noyelles—French and German Accounts—Indecisive Result—Order of the Day of General Faidherbe—Encounter at Bolbec—Panic of the French Commander—Skirmish at Yvetot—Occupation of Louviers—Singular Arrangement at Bitsche—Surrender of Tours.

ENCOURAGED by the hope that a fresh effort was being made to relieve the capital, the Government of the National Defence determined on another sortie against the besiegers. It was known that General Faidherbe, at the head of the Army of the North, was endeavouring to move on Paris, in obedience to orders to that effect which had been sent to him. The precise degree of his success or non-success was, however, very obscurely and insufficiently reported in the beleaguered city, owing to the difficulty of communication; and possibly, had General Trochu known the exact state of affairs in the direction of Amiens, the sortie might not have been attempted at that particular time. But Trochu and his colleagues had been fed with false hopes by M. Gambetta, who had led them to suppose that the provincial armies were in a more prosperous position than was actually the case, and who kept urging them to take active measures. On the 14th of December, this sanguine and impassioned Minister wrote from Bourges to the Government of the National Defence at Paris a letter in which he prophesied that General Faidherbe would soon retake La Fère, and would find there large stores of guns, ammunition, and provisions. "But," added M. Gambetta, "we are very anxious about *you*. It is now more than a week since we received any news of you, whether from yourselves, from the Prussians, or from abroad. The cable with England is not acting. What is happening? Take advantage of this south-west wind to send a balloon, which will fall in Belgium, and so put an end to our solicitude. The Prussian retreat is a movement about which there can be no mistake. If we can only hold out—and we can if we have the will—we shall beat them. They have already suffered enormous losses; and I learn from the most trustworthy sources that they experience the greatest difficulty in obtaining supplies of food. But to triumph we must resign ourselves to supreme sacrifices without murmuring, and fight even to the death." The reader hardly requires to be told that these remarks did not at all represent the real state of the country, and that the anticipation with regard to La Fère was not realised. General Trochu, however, seems to have relied on Faidherbe working his way towards Paris, or to have thought that a demonstration on his own part would facilitate the movements of that commander, by preventing Moltke from detaching any portion of the besieging force to the aid of Manteuffel in his northern operations. The sortie of December 21st was therefore resolved on.

To this renewal of active operations the tone of public opinion in Paris largely contributed. The newspapers perpetually insisted that Trochu had at his disposal an immense army, well provided with artillery; that they were losing time and eating up their stores; that the day of famine was approaching nearer, and yet that nothing was done; that at the commencement of the month they had killed 20,000 Prussians; and that, however horrible the truth might be, it was only by killing and killing again that they could make the besiegers loosen their grip. The argument was undoubtedly forcible, and it seems to have told even on the rather unadventurous disposition of General Trochu. The *Official Journal* of December 20th contained an article on the situation, which commenced by rebuking the independent press for its accusations against the Government on the ground of vacillation and of keeping back information from the public, but proceeded to an emphatic assertion of the necessity of combating the enemy by every possible means. "This programme," continued the official writer, "held out from the first day, continues and will continue to be that of the Government. If Paris stood alone in its resistance, duty would even then command its continuation. But, thank God, notwithstanding chequered successes, the efforts of the provinces unite with ours, and are daily becoming more telling. There too the Republic has replaced the wrecks of the Empire by extemporised armies which gain strength from their



ATTACK ON LE BOURGET.

heroism. In our painful position we cannot follow the glorious history of their daily struggles in every part of the country. The slenderness of our communications only allows us to gather imperfect intelligence, and our fellow-citizens should not exact from us particulars of which we are not in



THE EMPEROR WILLIAM.

receipt. When we receive despatches, we only keep confidential remarks to ourselves; we have always published, and shall continue to publish, the facts they convey. The result of these facts, to every unbiassed mind, is that the nation resolutely accepts the struggle, and that it will not allow itself to be ruled by the stranger." Who, it was asked, could have thought a few weeks earlier that "the young recruits of the Army of the Loire" would arrest the victorious armies of Prince Frederick Charles, of the Prince of Mecklenburg, and of the Crown Prince of Saxony? These young recruits formed an intact army, ready to stretch out its hand to the Army of the West, and to Bourbaki in the south, while General Faidherbe was simultaneously operating in the north. "This," said the *Official Journal*, "is, in a few words, our situation. We are not blind to its gravity nor to its perils; but we say that it is plain, and that it imposes the duty upon us to hold out and to fight. For the last three months, Paris has submitted to the greatest sufferings, and her constancy grows with her experience. Paris knows she can suffer more, and repudiates with horror the thought of a capitulation which fear of an aggravation of sufferings would wring from her. The Government has no

other merit but to join in this sentiment, and to become the executive of her will. It is determined to devote its whole energy to the task, and demands no other recompense than to be found not unworthy of the patriotic devotion of those who have placed their confidence in it. It will fight with them, and it has the firm hope that, with and by them, it will conquer the enemy. However great his strength, it is inferior to that of the French nation; and when Paris, when the Government of the National Defence, announce their indomitable resolution to fight and to conquer, they may declare, without fear of self-delusion, that they have all France on their side, and that, with the National Guard, the Garde Mobile, and the army, they will succeed in their sacred enterprise." Language of this nature at least proved the desire of the Government to stand well with the belligerent part of the population, which was in truth the vast majority. Whatever might have been the personal feelings of Trochu, it was evident to the Government generally that only by a vigorous initiative against the enemy could they maintain themselves at the head of affairs.

The Army of Paris could now count about 230,000 men. Of these nearly 68,000 were old soldiers; the rest were young recruits, Mobile Guards (Parisian and Provincial), men of the Free Corps, and sailors. Considering that many of the irregular troops were at least as good soldiers as the regiments of the Line, the force thus composed was far from contemptible. It had executed a very formidable sortie three weeks before, and had held some of its positions for a considerable time, finally retiring without molestation from the enemy. The prospects of a renewed sortie were therefore fairly good, and it was not surprising that the Parisians should insist upon it. Unfortunately, the Germans became aware of the design before the French could even commence its execution. A balloon from Paris, containing a despatch from General Trochu to the Delegation, in which the sortie was announced for the 20th, fell within the Prussian lines, and put the enemy on his guard. The movement did not in fact take place on the 20th, but it was only delayed one day. Indeed, there were a few preliminary movements on the night of the 20th. Some French troops were then observed to come out from under Fort Rosny, and a portion advanced towards Raincy, one of the Saxon outposts. Shots were exchanged, when the French retired, and rejoined the main body of their comrades beneath the neighbouring fort. A large number of tents had been set up under cover of the various works; bivouac-fires were lighted, and great masses of troops—amounting in all to about 50,000—poured forth, and proceeded to encamp for the night. Early on the morning of the 21st, a strong force, commanded by Admiral de la Roncière, who acted under the general direction of Ducrot, advanced against the village of Le Bourget. This unfortunate hamlet certainly tasted in no small measure of the bitterness of war. It had been the scene of severe fighting on the 27th, 28th, and 30th of October; and on the 30th of November a demonstration was directed against it, but recalled before any actual collision could occur. The operations in this quarter now formed part of the general plan of the sortie, and a desperate struggle ensued for the possession of the place. The Prussian King, in a telegram to Queen Augusta, expressed an opinion that the French were acting under the conviction that General Faidherbe's army was in the vicinity; and the *New Prussian* (*Cross*) *Gazette* remarked that the plan may have been decided on at a meeting which, it affirms, took place at Lille between Faidherbe himself and an aide de camp of Trochu. Be this as it may, the design seems to have been to make an advance between the lines of the Oise and the Marne, and so to threaten the German communications in a northern and easterly direction. It is also thought that one of the objects of the sortie was to obtain possession of the road to Lille, and of a large number of siege-cannon which, some days previously, had been brought round to the northern line of investment. The removal of these guns was supposed to have been kept secret; but the French somehow got intelligence as to their new quarters. The attack was delivered against the Prussian Guards and the Twelfth Saxon Corps, and the action altogether ranged over the whole extent of ground comprised between Dugny and Nogent, passing by Le Bourget, Bondy, Villemanble, and Neuilly-sur-Marne, at the last of which places it may be said to have touched the point of departure of the sortie of November 30th.

During the night of December 20th the Germans were on the watch, in consequence of what had been observed on the part of the enemy. The weather was very cold, and the besiegers, not being under the cover of forts, were unable to light fires, which would have exposed them to the chassepôt bullets and shells of the French. "All through that cold and dreary night," said the *Times* correspondent with the Saxon army, "there were movements of troops, proceeding to the support of the outposts, and to those positions from which it had been determined to resist the sortie. Horse, foot, and artillery, with ammunition-trains and baggage-

wagons innumerable, kept moving forward by the dim light of lanterns held just above the level of the road. The men seemed to be in as high spirits as if they were on their way home. They sang, laughed, and smoked, and cheered one another against the dispiriting effects of hard weather, darkness, and the fatigue of midnight marching." All were on the move before daybreak, and the French soon began to reveal their intentions. A heavy cannonade from the redoubt St. Ouen and from Fort Briche, directed against the Prussian positions between Argenteuil and Enghien, preceded the actual fighting. Two of the German batteries, erected half-way up the hill of Orgement, replied immediately, and Mont Valérien speedily joined in on the French side. Le Bourget was cannonaded from Fort L'Est, and for more immediate action there were field-batteries, two iron-clad locomotives, and mortars, the projectiles of which weighed seventy-five kilogrammes. The Prussians had strongly fortified themselves behind the wall surrounding the park of Le Bourget; but the French were enabled in the course of the morning to penetrate into the first houses of the village. The marines of the garrison of St. Denis and the 134th Regiment of the Line, in combination, made a determined assault on the place, and at the entrance a sanguinary combat ensued. One hundred prisoners were made by the French at this point; both sides suffered severely in killed and wounded. Great valour was exhibited by the Marines, and, out of the 600 engaged, no fewer than 279 were missing at roll-call. Many officers fell, but the fight continued for a long while. This was on the northern side of the village; and simultaneously another attack was directed against the south. Here the French found their advance arrested by strong barricades and loopholed walls, which prevented their pushing on farther than the first houses. Considerable execution was done by the fire of the German batteries, which were stationed between Blanc Mesnil and Aulnay, and at Aulnay itself. After about an hour's fighting, there was an almost complete lull; but at a little before eleven o'clock the engagement between the field-artillery of the two armies recommenced with great fury.

The French now advanced their batteries towards the Forest of Bondy, bordering on the Saxon lines, to points in front of Drancy, and to the immediate vicinity of Le Bourget. The fire of these batteries was supported by the forts; but the Germans replied with excellent effect. The practice on both sides was indeed very good in the main, though two of the French drivers shirked the storm of balls, and deserted their horses to find cover; whereupon the horses galloped off to the Saxon lines. "Sometimes," said the *Times* correspondent with the Saxon army, who saw the combat from a distance, "a battery at each side was fired at the same instant, and flame like sheet-lightning constantly lit up the battle-ground all across." The atmosphere was thick and foggy, "and each discharge," wrote this observer, "rushed out of the gun's mouth in a large ball of fire, which expanded with terrific grandeur, and instantly disappeared in flame, its subsequent course being marked by a dense cloud of smoke, which only cleared away when the projectile had fallen and exploded." The same correspondent said that while the artillery firing was going on, the infantry, excepting at Le Bourget, were digging potatoes beyond the range of the German batteries. About noon, the French made a rush, and got further into the village than they had previously done. It is said, however, that they never obtained complete possession of the place. The aspect of affairs was now terrific. The opposing forces seemed wrapped in flame and smoke, and the roaring of the cannon and rattle of the musketry filled the air with deafening clamour. For some hours the assailants held their positions in Le Bourget, though exposed to a very hot fire from windows and cellars; but in the end they were obliged to retire. A German account says that the French had three divisions at Le Bourget, to which their adversaries could only oppose fifteen companies of the Guards; yet that the latter were enabled to drive the attacking troops back under the fire of the forts, and to take 1,000 prisoners, as well as inflicting severe losses in killed and wounded. When the Prussians re-took the village, it was found necessary to storm house by house, so determined was the resistance of the French. On the outside of one of the houses, a French soldier had scrawled, in the German language, "The Prussians are dogs and cowards. We shall kill them all." This exasperated the Prussians to fury. They broke open the doors and windows of the dwelling, amidst a heavy fire from within, and killed with the butt-ends of their rifles every Frenchman they could find.

While the struggle was going forward at Le Bourget, another sortie was being conducted against Stains, to the north of Paris. The attack proceeded from St. Denis, and the troops were here encountered by a detachment of the Foot Guards, by whom they were repulsed. The sortie towards the Saxon lines was made on both sides of the Ourcq canal—from Bobigny upon Sevran, and from Rosny and Neuilly-sur-Marne upon Chelles, situated on the northern side of the Marne on the

railway to Châlons; in other words, against the right wing of the Saxon position (which extended through the Forest of Bondy), and in particular towards that point where, by means of a bridge, a connection was maintained between the troops stationed on the opposite banks of the river. The railway line was in the hands of the Germans as far as Chelles; but it was only used up to the little town of Lagny, about a mile to the east, as it was not considered advisable to place the chief point of departure for Germany at a spot which could be bombarded by the forts to the north-east of Paris. Between twelve and one o'clock, a division of the French presented themselves before the two outposts of Ville-Evrard and Maison Blanche, at the very time when the struggle at Le Bourget was at its height, and when it was believed that Chelles was safe for the day. The Saxons stationed at these two outposts were so numerically weak that they had no choice but to retire, and the French settled down in the villages, apparently thinking that there would be no attempt to dispossess them until the following morning. But between six and seven o'clock in the evening—long after it was dark—three battalions of the 107th Regiment of Saxons, commanded by Colonel Lindemann, made their appearance at Maison Blanche so suddenly that they re-captured it without any resistance, and seized a major, a captain, four other officers, and forty-six men. One of these officers, according to the relation of the *Times* correspondent, vigorously protested against the Saxon proceeding, as being contrary to precedent. The days were short and the evenings dark, and he had supposed it to be understood that after sunset nothing in the way of an attack would be made on either side. Having prospered so well at Maison Blanche, Colonel Lindemann next proceeded to Ville-Evrard, a long and straggling village. At this point the French offered a very determined resistance, and the fight lasted until after ten o'clock at night, when nearly 300 prisoners and the greater part of the village were taken by the Saxons. A portion of the place, however, still remained in the hands of the French when the fighting was suspended. The seizure of these positions by the French had, according to one of the correspondents, been preceded by a very decided advantage gained by the artillery of the attacking force over that of their adversaries. Sheltered by the railway embankment, and barring the road to Chelles from the marshes, the Saxons had established a battery of twenty pieces of artillery, forming a kind of redoubt. The French guns on the plateau of Avron, however, assisted by those of the Fort of Nogent, opened fire on this work, and with such good effect that they dismounted every piece. The troops commanded by Generals Malroy and Blaise, under the superior direction of General Vinoy, were then enabled to advance, and, in spite of the vigorous opposition of the Saxons, to take possession, as we have seen, of Maison Blanche and Ville-Evrard, as well as Neuilly-sur-Marne.

Several other sorties—some of which were apparently nothing more than feints—were made in various directions on the same day. Towards the south-east, upon the peninsula formed by the bend of the Marne nearest the Seine, about fifteen battalions made their appearance, but without proceeding to any actual attack upon the German lines. In the south, near Epinay, the gunboats on the Seine made a demonstration against the Bavarian positions and those of the Sixth Corps; while to the west, from the direction of Suresnes, and on the piece of ground between Nanterre and Colombes, several battalions of Mobiles issued forth at six in the morning, and advanced beyond St. Cloud, accompanied by a very brilliant Staff. The demonstration in this quarter was chiefly against Montretout, Buzenval, and L'Ile du Chiard, where, according to French accounts, the Mobile Guards took part in the action with great ardour. The object of these less important movements was doubtless to distract the attention of the Germans from the points really menaced, according to the practice commonly observed in sorties.

A Würtemberg officer, in a letter to one of the German papers, dated December 23rd, gave an account of the annoyance caused by the fire of Mont Avron. He wrote:—

"We are quite under the guns of Mont Avron, which during the last few weeks has been made a perfect fortress, and well understands how to give us trouble. On the 21st we marched at half-past six A.M. into our alarm-position as covering party in case of a sortie against the Saxons and the Prussian Guards, Avron meanwhile making a terrific noise. We remained there till four P.M. Our artillery fired well from three batteries at Noisy-le-Grand on French columns which tried to deploy from Avron towards the north and east; but it had to suffer in some degree from the 24 and 12-pounders of the Mont. At four P.M. a battalion of us proceeded to Cournay to guard the bridge, but at five were ordered back to Champs, as nothing more was to be apprehended on the Marne. I spent the terribly cold night in entrenchments, and at half-past seven the next morning (the 22nd) our artillery again began a violent fire on French columns which showed themselves at Neuilly. Avron immediately took up the game, and fired unmercifully on our field batteries, but happily did us no damage, except that an artilleryman lost a hand by it. At eight we were

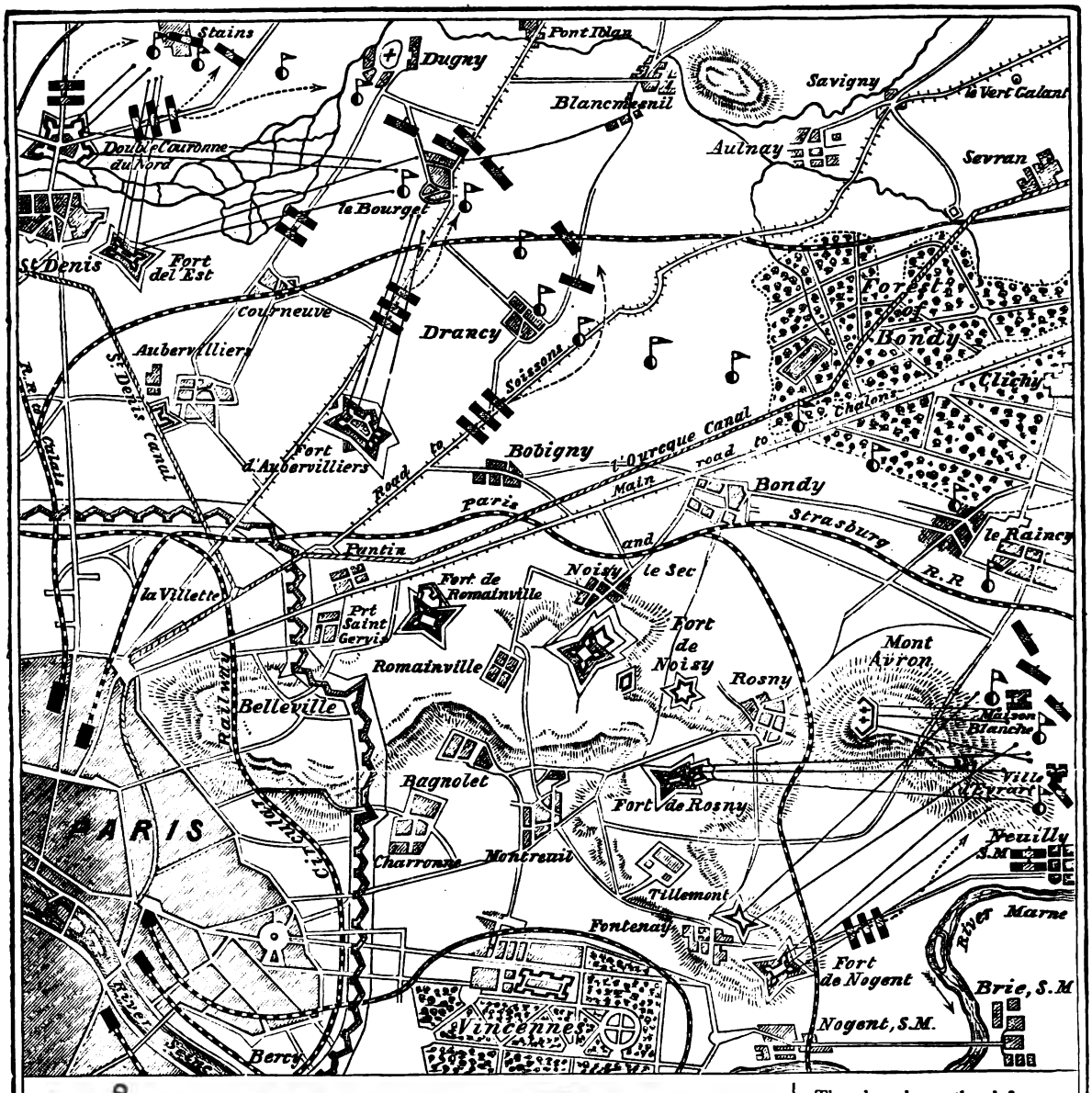
told to hasten to the Marne, to cover the artillery against a hostile infantry fire. There we remained till eleven, when our artillery drew off, as no enemy any longer presented himself. We ourselves were too distant to take any part in the firing. Now, however, Avron began pouring a hail of grenades on our poor Noisy. We immediately made the soldiers take refuge in the cellar, while we remained in the second storey, so as to be able to watch, but soon fled into the *parterre*. When they at last singled out our house for attack, so that the grenade-splinters struck the window-frames, we too had to put up with the cellar. Strange to say, no ball struck the house, though the ground around it was quite furrowed. We lost only one man, who was wounded in the thigh. Altogether the gentlemen may have launched 500 or 600 grenades into the village, which to-day looks partially destroyed. It is lucky that the French grenades are nothing like so destructive as ours; frequently one goes clean through a house, and only explodes harmlessly beyond it. Many do not explode at all. I counted about twenty-five such yesterday. At five P.M. there was quiet at last."

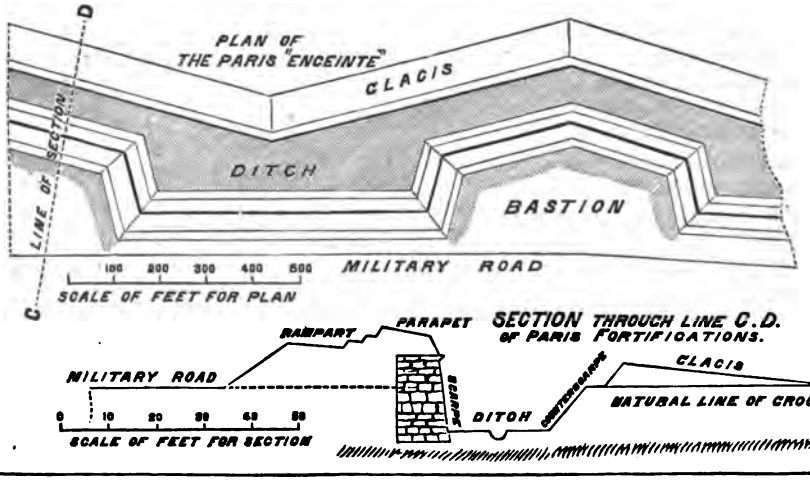
Late on the 21st, General Ducrot occupied the farm of Groslay and Grand Drancy, and Trochu passed the night on the field of battle. Though once more repulsed at several points, the French had again proved their ability to threaten the positions of the Germans, and to maintain themselves in localities beyond the walls and external forts. The engagement had been for the most part an artillery duel; but it had demonstrated the formidable character of the French guns, and had shown that the troops themselves were acquiring greater steadiness with practice. The *Daily News* correspondent, describing the close of the proceedings, wrote:—

"Although in other parts of the line, at least to the northward, the firing seemed to be dying away as the twilight came on, shells continued to be thrown towards Clichy, with perhaps greater frequency than in the earlier part of the afternoon. About five o'clock, the fire from the German guns about Aulnay, which had been dying away as it ceased to evoke a response, suddenly flared up again, and continued very brisk for a quarter of an hour. It appeared to me as if the French were disposed to halt at least some of their batteries for the night in advance of the position out of which they had come in the morning, and that the warm fire of their opponents was intended to prevent the execution of this design. The French guns, which had been utterly silent for half an hour, could not refrain from replying to this fire, however feebly, and they were unlimbered—a couple of batteries, in the flat some distance to the north-east of Bobigny. It was very pretty, in the all-but darkness, to watch the rapid flashes. But the pyrotechnic display was not of long continuance. The German fire was too steady and rapid to admit of a lengthened interlude. All grew silent and dark again over against Bobigny; and it was as if the French array—the forts, whose grey embrasures were visible in the daylight, the serried batteries of artillery which had maintained their share of the day's din with so much spirit, and the dense battalions of infantry men which had done nothing all day but hold themselves in reserve—as if all these were blotted off the black face of the night. But not for long. From the far-off firing-platform of Fort de l'Est suddenly flashed out the electric light, followed by a flash that heralded the dull thud which, as it seemed, quite a minute after, struck the ear. At what de l'Est was firing we could not tell—if indeed at anything, and not in pursuance of that Gascon custom, to which the Paris forts are addicted, of having the 'last word' in every affair, no matter what its issue. Presently there rose against the sky another light further south—directly between Clichy and Paris—a whole chain of lights, so numerous that they blended as in one great fire, and made the heavens bright above them. These were the bivouac-fires of the French camping in the open in the position they had taken up on the previous night, their right resting on Bondy, their left on Bobigny. There they lie—foiled indeed in whatever they contemplated to-day, if it was of an actively offensive nature, but still stubbornly refusing to relinquish it. . . . . In my opinion, the cue was given to the motive of the day's work in the terms of a communication made by General von Montbe, at his hospitable dinner-table. All day long, heavy columns of French infantry, massed on and about the slope of Avron, and as far forward as Neuilly, had been threatening the gap of Chelles. This alluvial tract presents several obvious advantages. It is quite flat, is open in the physical sense all the way to Lagny—all the way to Châlons for that matter—and the French, holding Neuilly as they do, already sit astride of the flat country, and can make their dispositions without annoyance or exposure on the same level as their succeeding operations. Then there is no river to cross. But for that somewhat sturdy obstacle, the Saxons, there would be a straight run home, unobstructed by water or broken ground, all the way, as I have said, to Lagny; and behind a sallying force there stands up the formidable Avron."

The French had recently adopted a system of improvising field-entrenchments; and the plan was seen in operation on the 21st. Considerable bodies of men, carrying pick-axes and shovels, accompanied the troops. As the army advanced, these men threw up entrenchments and redoubts; and one of the works so constructed on the flank of Le Bourget, under the enemy's fire, enabled the French to take Drancy early in the morning, without a shot being fired into it. General Ducrot slept there at night, and on the following morning nearly fell into the hands of the enemy, whom at a little distance he mistook for a body of Francs-tireurs.

Some further operations, on a small scale, occurred on the 22nd. In the morning of that day,





The plan shows the defences of Paris and the forts on the east and north-east sides; also the extreme advanced posts of the Prussians in that quarter, and the places where the French troops succeeded in temporarily breaking through the Prussian first line during the sortie against le Bourget on the 21st of December, 1870.

Accompanying is a plan and section of the *enceinte* of the Paris fortifications.

Prussian outposts.

French troops.

THE SORTIE AGAINST LE BOURGET, DEC. 21ST, 1870.



A FLAG OF TRUCE.

two French batteries moved forward against Chelles, and, joining with the troops yet remaining in Ville-Evrard, made a brief demonstration, but, after a little while, retired before a hot fire from the opposite bank of the river. Nothing further was done that day; but at two o'clock P.M. on the 23rd a furious cannonade once more burst out from the French forts. The firing from the field-batteries at Drancy and Courneuve was particularly heavy. Thirty thousand French infantry stretched in a long-extended line from Courneuve, across the plain behind Drancy, as far as Bobigny, if not farther. Le Bourget received the greater part of the firing; but two or three other positions were also cannonaded, though in a slighter degree. Occasionally the infantry made a start forward, as if they would once again have attempted to carry Le Bourget; but they always turned round and ran back, notwithstanding the desperate endeavours of the principal officers to drive them on. The German batteries on the tract between Aulnay and Sevran replied to the French guns, and at length the contest ceased, without any great mischief having been done on either part. Again at midnight, and through the greater part of the next day —Christmas Eve—the terrible cannonading was resumed; but on Christmas Day all was quiet, and the opposing armies were left to keep the festival with as much comfort as the severity of the weather and the hardships of military life would permit.

The cold was indeed terrible. It was long since so hard a winter had been known in Paris. Bitter frost and snow had taken possession of the land, and at night the breath of the outpost soldiers, doing duty in the open field, congealed on the beard and moustache, and fringed them with pendent icicles. "The night of the 21st of December," said General Trochu, when addressing the National Assembly in June, 1871, "was so cold that 900 men were frost-bitten in the trenches. Twenty thousand soldiers also returned to Paris suffering from anæmia, *and I saw them no more.*" The French troops were often very inadequately clad, and they wrapped themselves in anything they could seize. Blankets, old sacking, window-curtains, sheepskins, and other incongruous articles, were turned to the one great purpose of keeping out the deadly cold; and the army in consequence presented a very grotesque and unmilitary appearance. Wood for firing might have been sent out to them from Paris; but, with that extraordinary want of forethought which distinguished the whole of the French operations during the war, no provision of this nature was made, and the soldiers were obliged to tear the wood-work out of the houses of the villages occupied by them, in order to light their bivouac-fires. Some, when not actually engaged with the enemy, crouched in ditches, and tried to preserve a little warmth by close contact. Others dug pits five feet deep in the ground, covered them with doors and shutters, lit fires within them, and opened a small hole at the top to let out the smoke. The Paris correspondent of the *Morning Post* breakfasted in one of these pits, and found it very comfortable. Nevertheless, the sufferings of the men were great. Several were actually frozen to death at their posts, and the energy of all was lowered and depreciated by the miseries of the time. The hardness of the ground, moreover, was an obstacle to the making of trenches and earth-works. Both armies, indeed, were sorely tried by the weather; but it was worse for the French than for the Germans, because their organisation was less effective, and because they were obliged to conduct active operations, while their opponents simply stood on the defensive, under the protection of such shelter as they had been able to obtain.

The "Besieged Resident" of the *Daily News* gave some account of the sortie of December 21st, as far as its course could be watched from St. Denis.

"Here everybody was in the streets, asking everybody else for news. The forts all round it were firing heavily. On the Place before the cathedral there was a great crowd of men, women, and children. The sailors, who are quartered here in great numbers, said that they had carried Le Bourget early in the morning, but that they had been obliged to fall back, with the loss of about a third of their number. Most of them had hatchets by their sides; and they attack a position much as if they were boarding a ship. About a hundred prisoners had been brought into the town in the morning, as well as two *Frères Chrétiens*, who had been wounded, and for whom the greatest sympathy was expressed. Little seemed to be known of what was passing. 'The Prussians will be here in an hour,' shouted one man. 'The Prussians are being exterminated,' shouted another. 'What is this?' cried the crowd, as Monseigneur Bauer, the Bishop *in partibus infidelium* of some place or other, now came riding along with his staff. He held up his two fingers, and turned his hand right and left. His pastoral blessing was, however, but a half-success. The women crossed themselves, and the men muttered '*farceur.*' The war which is now raging has produced many humbugs, but none to my mind equal to this Bishop. His great object is to see and to be seen, and most thoroughly does he succeed in his object. The trappings of his horse are thickly sprinkled with Geneva crosses. By his side rides a standard-bearer, bearing aloft a flag with a red cross. Eight aides de camp, arrayed in a sort of purple and gold fancy uniform, follow him, and the *cortége* is closed by two grooms in unimpeachable

tops. In this guise, and followed by this *état-major*, he is a conspicuous figure upon a field of battle, and produces much the same effect as the head of a circus riding into a town on a piebald horse, surrounded by clowns and pets of the ballet. He was the confessor of the Empress, and is now the almoner of the press; but why he wears jack-boots, why he capers about on a fiery horse, why he has a staff of aides de camp, and why he has two grooms, are things which no one seems to know. He patronises generals and admirals, doctors and commissariat officers, and they submit to be patronised by him."

The strength of the Germans before Paris was augmented, just previous to Christmas, by a body of Prussian sailors who were sent from Kiel to man the gunboats captured on the Loire. They were reviewed before the Prefecture at Versailles, on the morning of December 22nd, by the King and the Crown Prince, together with Prince Adalbert, Admiral of the Fleet. The sailors were armed with needle-guns, and carried knapsacks like soldiers. Prussia has long been desirous of taking rank as a great naval Power, and the hope of gaining a more advantageous maritime position was undoubtedly one of the reasons which determined the war with Denmark in 1864. The King was probably glad to make an exhibition of his naval force, even though on a small scale, before the eyes of the jealous French; and he may have hoped that something might be done with the gunboats to balance the preponderance of France in this respect. The appearance of the men was satisfactory; but the progress of the war gave them no opportunity of distinguishing themselves.

The attempt of General Faidherbe to relieve Paris from the north, which was made in conjunction with the sorties just described, ended as unfortunately as that of the Army of the Loire at the commencement of the month. Yet this result could hardly be attributed to want of ability or experience on the part of the commander. General Louis Léon César Faidherbe was fifty-two years of age at the period now being described. He was a native of Lille (where his head-quarters had been but recently established), and, after receiving a portion of his education in the college of that city, he entered the Polytechnic School in 1838, and afterwards studied at the Military School of Metz, which he left in 1842, with a lieutenant's commission in the First Regiment of Engineers. He distinguished himself greatly in Algeria, and in 1852 was sent to Senegal, where he acted with so much vigour and intelligence that he was made Governor of the colony in the following year. At that time the French settlers were much disturbed by a fanatic calling himself the Prophet El-Hadji-Omar, who announced that his mission was to found a Mussulman Empire in Central Africa. This native chieftain was subdued by Faidherbe, who afterwards left Senegal to command the subdivision of Sidi-ben-Abbas; but the affairs of the former colony prospered so badly after his departure, that he was recalled in 1863, with the rank of brigadier-general. In 1865, however, the state of his health necessitated his removal from the poisonous climate of Senegal, and he was therefore sent to take the highest command in the subdivision of Bône. It will thus be seen that Faidherbe was a man conversant with affairs, with government, and with military enterprise. He had also written much on the manners, language, and history of the Moorish races, and on the topography, geology, and archæology of those parts of Africa with which he was personally acquainted.

After the defeat of the original Army of the North, before Amiens, in the closing days of November, the force was rapidly reorganised by its new commander, and a fresh plan of campaign was formed, or rather a definite plan was substituted for a mere system of desultory movements. In the second week of December, the army left Lille, and shortly afterwards passed St. Quentin and La Fère in its southward march, but then suddenly turned to the north-west. According to French accounts, Faidherbe had with him four divisions, amounting altogether to 35,000 men; the Germans immediately opposed to him appear to have numbered 30,000. According to German accounts, the French had twice as many men as their opponents; but this was probably an exaggeration or a misapprehension. Faidherbe was known to have taken up a position to the north of Amiens, and the German forces—forming a detachment, under von Göben, of the army of General Manteuffel—left Château Blangy-Trouville at five o'clock A.M. on the 23rd of December. A bitter wind blew across the open plain traversed by the men, horses, and artillery. This plain was bordered by a narrow but long line of wood, separated by a small river from a hill extending from Querrieux to Busy, a distance of about three miles. On this hill the French were drawn up, with more than seventy heavy guns already in position. The day had now broken, and the nature of the opposition they had to encounter was visible to the Prussian troops. The Fifteenth Division, under the command of General von Kummer, was ordered to advance and give battle, while the Sixteenth Division was to move on the right wing of the French, and endeavour to surround it. The enemy was still at a considerable distance; but,

the plan of action having been settled, the Germans moved forward, and, after about an hour's marching, got near enough to the advanced guard to exchange shots. A heavy artillery fire ensued, and the French aimed so well that they materially damaged the Prussian guns, and even silenced one of the batteries. Meanwhile, the infantry had taken the villages of Querrieux and Pont-Noyelles by storm. The positions were not relinquished by the French without a most determined struggle, and the dead and wounded of both nationalities thickly covered the earth. The Prussians appeared to be gaining ground towards the close of the day, when suddenly, as the shades of night were closing over the scene, a most awful artillery fire was reopened from the side of the hill. Only a very feeble reply could be made by the Prussians, for they had expended their ammunition; and the French, perceiving the disadvantage at which they had their enemy, poured down the slope, and forcibly attacked Querrieux. A portion of the Prussian infantry was driven back; but the Fusilier Battalion of the 65th Regiment ultimately checked the further advance of the French. Two attempts were made by Faidherbe's troops to retake the village, but both ended in failure. It was a murderous struggle with the sword and bayonet, not a shot being fired; and the men, maddened by the dreadful fury of conflict, fought on in the midst of flaming houses, for the village had been set on fire in several places. In the end, the Prussians retained possession of Querrieux. Hundreds of vehicles were sent out from Amiens to convey the wounded to the hospital which had been improvised in the rooms of the Museum. The highway from Querrieux to Amiens was covered with wagons, carriages, carts, and other kinds of vehicles, crowded with desperately injured soldiers. The distance traversed on this road of death and agony was twelve miles. The hospital, though capable of accommodating several hundred patients, was soon overfilled, and it was necessary to deposit several of the sufferers in the passages.

The result of the action was indecisive. Neither side had gained any positive advantage of a nature to determine the issue, and it appeared probable that the fight would be continued on the following day. General von Göben fully expected that he would be attacked in the morning. For the present, he determined not to renew the offensive on his own part, but to stand on his guard until the arrival of fresh regiments. General Manteuffel at once proceeded to the spot with reinforcements; at the same time, General von Senden was advancing from St. Quentin, in the direction of Corbie, with a division, and Prince Albrecht was coming from Paris with the cavalry of the Guard. Nothing was done on the 24th, and on the 25th the French quietly moved off in the direction of Arras, to the north-east. Their commissariat was defective, as was frequently the case during the war; and this is said to have had more to do with the retreat of Faidherbe than considerations of a strategical nature. The general made an imposing demonstration on the top of the hill; fired rifles and cannon, and sent a number of cavalry galloping to and fro along the line. To these manifestations the Prussians made no reply; and while the feint was being assiduously carried on at the summit of the hill, the main body of the army was secretly in movement behind. When all had disappeared, the field was found to be in a terrible state. Hundreds of dead, contorted with the agony of violent dissolution, lay about, and the ground was littered with knapsacks, képis, helmets, broken weapons, tents, and uniforms. Both sides claimed the victory on the 23rd; but it is certain that Faidherbe, though not driven from his positions, found it convenient, or perhaps even necessary, to retreat two days later, and it is therefore obvious that the Germans had the best of the encounter, as far as the ultimate result was concerned. If dependence can be placed on their own assertions, they took 1,000 prisoners.

The French version of the engagement was given in General Faidherbe's report, dated December 26th, which said:—

"The army had two days previously gone into cantonments at Corbie, and in the villages situated along the left bank of a little brook called La Hallue, which falls into the Somme at Daours. They had selected as the battle-field the heights which skirt the left bank, thus compelling the enemy to cross the valley, when, coming from Amiens, he debouched by the left bank. General Faidherbe ordered the troops only to offer a slight resistance in the villages with a few skirmishers, and at once to retire to the commanding heights in the rear. This order was punctually executed, and about eleven A.M. the two armies were in sight of each other, separated by a valley, narrow and swampy. They commenced cannonading each other over the houses, each side opening fire from seventy or eighty guns, and at the same time the enemy's skirmishers, having penetrated into the houses of the villages, commenced exchanging shots with ours. Towards half-past three P.M., finding the cannonading had begun to slacken on both sides, the order was given along the whole line to our infantry to charge down upon the enemy, and drive him out of the villages to the positions in the rear. That order was vigorously and brilliantly executed. At the extreme

left, the Moulac division cleared Daours and Vecquemont; the du Bessol division captured Pont-Noyelles and Querrieux. The Robin division (Mobilised Gardes du Nord) entered the village of Behancourt, and finally the Derroja division, at the right, charged the villages of Bavelincourt and Prehercourt, pursuing the enemy for some distance. At five P.M. our success was everywhere complete; but night had come on; it was no longer possible to distinguish friends from foes, and the Prussians took advantage of this circumstance to effect a re-entry into Daours, Querrieux, and Behancourt, without encountering any resistance. Our troops, having retaken all their positions of the previous day, passed the night in them, and remained the following day until two P.M., to see if the enemy would attempt to renew the engagement, which, however, he did not. A few rifle-shots were exchanged at long ranges. After thus having confirmed its victory, the army proceeded to its cantonments between Corbie and Albert. Our young troops have suffered much from the severity of the weather and the privations inevitable under the circumstances. The bread which was served out to the men on the battle-field was frozen, and consequently uneatable. The losses may be estimated approximately at 200 men killed, and 1,000 or 1,200 wounded, the latter for the most part slightly. We do not know what losses the enemy has suffered; but the fire of our artillery, which was excellently served, must have sorely tried him. Some prisoners and wounded men were left in our hands. A few days' rest in our excellent cantonments have been granted to the Army of the North."

In an order of the day, issued from Lille, General Faidherbe congratulated his troops on their gallant conduct, and on what he termed "the glorious success" which had been their reward. The artillery had been excellently handled, and the infantry, after retaining their positions with firmness under the fire of the enemy, showed the greatest vigour in the attack at close quarters. The Mobiles and the Mobilised Guards, "seasoned from day to day by marches and engagements," had proved that they could be relied on. All had borne the rigours of the temperature with resignation. So far, the order of the day looked fairly; but the final paragraph had an ugly aspect. It ran:—"The General Commanding-in-Chief has ascertained that men, small in number, forgetting all their duties, disbanded themselves before and after the battle. Severe examples will be made." The want of spirit of these runaways, however, must not be allowed to detract from the general character of the Army of the North, which, on the whole, certainly behaved well.

While the armies of Generals von Göben and Faidherbe were watching each other on the 24th of December, and the latter was quietly making preparations to retreat, a skirmish of not inconsiderable dimensions was going forward at Bolbec, a town in the vicinity of Havre. On the 23rd, the head-quarters of the French commander, Colonel de Beaumont, were established at Melamare, and it was known that a Prussian corps, coming from Fonville was advancing along the flat, open country which extends between Noinlot and Bolbec. The French outpost at Roncherolles, in front of Bolbec, was driven back on the morning of the 24th by the Prussian advanced guard, and at eight o'clock A.M. the engagement was general. The left wing of the French forces (which were in all about 6,000 strong) was confronted by a large body of Prussians, and the sharpshooters of the former were compelled to fall back on the farm of La Jolie, which stands on an eminence, and which was protected by two French guns. These dismounted a Prussian gun, and inflicted serious losses on the Germans. The centre column of the same forces was stationed at the same farm, and, combined with the left wing, it kept up a heavy musketry fire. Matters seemed to be going fairly for the French, when an unaccountable panic fell on the army, and entirely changed the fortune of the day. Colonel de Beaumont, according to an account from Havre, suddenly fancied, without any reason, that 10,000 Prussians threatened his left wing, and at once came to the conclusion that a retreat on Havre was the only means of safety. A council of war was held, and the colonel spoke so positively on the subject that the inferior officers did not like to take the responsibility of opposing his decision. Accordingly, the French troops, though they greatly outnumbered the enemy, were ordered to retire; and at eight o'clock in the evening, after a forced march, they entrenched themselves behind the works of defence by which Havre was protected. M. Ramel, the Sub-Prefect of Havre, who had seen the hasty retreat of the troops, spent a part of the night in reconnoitring and investigating into the facts of the case; but the 10,000 Prussians were not to be found, and the Sub-Prefect returned to Havre in a fury of rage. Colonel de Beaumont was of course at once superseded by another officer. The narrative of the affair to which allusion has already been made says that the troops behaved thoroughly well, but that, owing to the incompetency of the commanding officers, the affair ended in a comparative failure, when, with better management, it would have been easy to rid a great part of the Lower Seine of the invaders. On the withdrawal of the French, the Prussians entered Bolbec, and seized the Mayor, the municipal clerks, and several of the notables of the town; but they were released after two hours'



EVACUATION OF A VILLAGE NEAR PARIS.

detention, and the German troops soon quitted the place.

On the same day (December 24th) another skirmish took place at Yvetot, to the north-east of Havre. A detachment of General Göben's troops, about 1,800 in number, was stationed at that town, when it was attacked by 3,000 Frenchmen, advancing from Havre under Colonel Macmanard. An artillery and cavalry fight ensued, and the French were driven back, with a loss of 200 prisoners, as far as the fortifications of the town from which they had set out. These fortifications were supposed to be impregnable. The lines, according to a correspondent of the *Standard*, were about six miles in length, and could only be approached by two roads, both of which could be swept by batteries, with which might be combined the flanking fire of the men-of-war in the harbour. The city certainly presented a formidable obstruction to the Prussians; but in most other parts of Normandy the latter had their own way with but little opposition. The ease with which they entered towns, obtained supplies, and struck terror into the population, is vividly shown by an account of their proceedings in various directions given in the *Publicateur* of Louviers, in the department of Eure, which said :—"On the 8th Louviers was occupied by Prussian troops coming from Andelle. Twenty scouts on horseback arrived at about one o'clock, and announced at the Mairie that a column of from 5,000 to 6,000 men would pass the night at Louviers. The detachment, under General von Massow, composed of two regiments, five squadrons, and two batteries, entered at four in the afternoon.



DOING OUTPOST DUTY.

The officers wrote with chalk on the doors the number of men and horses that each householder would have to lodge. The soldiers at once entered their quarters. The muskets of the firemen and the National Guards were destroyed by order of the general. The Prussians left next morning at seven, after taking the horses of the proprietors on to Evreux. On the night of that day, a party of cavalry passed through the town. On the 10th, 500 infantry slept at Louviers, and went the next morning towards Rouen. A detachment from the direction of Pacy passed the night of the 11th at Louviers; and on the following morning 3,000 or 4,000 Prussians, coming from Vernon, with cavalry

and artillery, arrived, commanded by General von Pristelwitz, who was returning to Rouen." In this way, many of the smaller towns were cowed into submission by the mere presence of the dreaded stranger.

Among the fortresses still holding out in the east of France was that of Bitsche, in the north-eastern corner of Lorraine; and this (after having been bombarded without material results in September and October) was now being "observed" in a very singular way. The place was so strong that it could only have been taken by a regular siege; but it was at the same time too insignificant, as regarded the general operations of the war, to repay the trouble and expense of an elaborate attack. The German corps engaged in watching it accordingly entered into an agreement with the garrison, in virtue of which not a shot was to be fired by either party. The country people of the neighbourhood were even allowed to go to and fro, and to take provisions into the fort, which was in this way well supplied. So amicable a feeling was established between the two armies that the outposts frequently met in friendly intercourse. The fortress and the investing troops, in fact, simply neutralised each other; and it was stated at the time that, had it not been that Bitsche guarded a high road, and that the garrison, unless prevented, would have stopped the provision-trains of the Germans passing that way, the latter would have abandoned the place.

Tours, which had been the seat of the Delegate Government up to the 10th of December, was compelled to surrender to the Germans on the 21st. A division of the Hanoverians under Voigts Rhetz having, on the 20th, encountered and defeated a division of the Twenty-first French Corps a few miles north of the city, the Germans pressed forward, and on the following morning appeared before the walls. A bombardment was opened from the neighbouring heights, and the shells, falling in the streets, killed several civilians. A flag of truce was then hoisted, and the Mayor, proceeding to the hostile force, requested that the cannonade might be stopped. This was granted, and the Hanoverians entered the town. The French commander was General Pisani, and the account of his proceedings given in the *Liberté* stated:—

"On Tuesday, the 20th, the approach of the Prussians was made known. General Pisani had not under his command a sufficient force to warrant him in risking a battle against a Prussian army well furnished with artillery; but he and his men were too courageous to permit the enemy to enter Tours without experiencing some resistance. To have waited in Tours for the arrival of the Prussians, although it would have offered advantages to our troops, would have exposed the inhabitants to serious danger, and, in case of our failure, to the vindictiveness of the enemy. General Pisani therefore quitted the town, and at Monnaie, on the road to Château Renault, he encountered the Prussians. The unequal contest—unequal in respect of the strength of the forces engaged, and especially as to artillery—was waged with great determination, and proved very destructive to the Prussians, and very honourable for us. The 6,000 men under General Pisani would certainly have rendered a good account of the 12,000 or 14,000 Prussians if our six field-pieces had been able to withstand the fire of the twenty-four Prussian guns. Duty, however, was accomplished. After fighting from morning until evening with a bravery beyond praise, and after inflicting great losses upon the enemy, General Pisani gave the signal of retreat. The next day the enemy appeared in great numbers. It must have been from forgetfulness or hesitation, or possibly from tardy respect for the laws of war, but the Prussians did not accompany their occupation of Tours with any serious violence or excessive requisitions. The Tourangeaux had certainly not waited for them. At the Café de la Ville, usually so animated and crowded with customers, the soldiers of King William could not find a single waiter to serve them even with a glass of water. The Hôtel de l'Univers was kept closely shut all day, and the occupying troops had to use force to obtain admittance. Upon entering Tours, the Prussians evinced much anxiety upon two points. They made strict inquiries for the houses where the members of the Delegation of the Government and the principal functionaries of the Republic had been lodged. They also made minute searches through all parts of the railway station and the warehouses, expressing their belief that arms had been concealed there. The truth was that the railway station did not contain a single musket or a grain of powder. The alarm caused by the invasion was great. An omnibus met the advancing columns in the Rue Royale, and the driver pulled up; whereupon two women, the only passengers, overcome by terror, threw themselves out of the vehicle, uttering piercing shrieks. No persons dared to leave their houses to go to their assistance. A Prussian officer visited the post-office, and took possession of all the letters addressed *Poste Restante*."

The Germans did not long remain in Tours. It was too distant from the main body of Prince Frederick Charles's army to permit of its being held with safety. Voigts Rhetz was accordingly directed to return with his Tenth Corps to Orleans, in order to watch the movements of Bourbaki, whose designs were the more threatening in consequence of the inability of the Germans to tell in what quarter he would strike; and the recent capital of the Delegation returned to the dulness and obscurity which are its ordinary characteristics.

CHAPTER VII.

Christmas, 1870—Disturbed State of Europe—Sinking of English Colliers in the Seine by the Prussians—Statements of the Sailors—Despatch of Count Bismarck—The Law of the Case—Remarks on the Position of this Country towards Prussia—Attempts of the French Prisoners to Escape—The Occupied Provinces—Christmas Festivities among the Germans—Red Republican Agitation—Symptoms of Approaching Submission—Despotism of the Bordeaux Delegation—Republican Extravagances—Division between the Large Towns and the Provinces—Correspondence between Trinity College, Dublin, and Göttingen University, on the Bombardment of Paris—The Influence of Germany in Europe—Moral Aspect of the Bombardment—Views of the Queen of Prussia on the War—The Alleged Intention of Prussia to restore the French Emperor—Internal Condition of Paris—The Camp at Conlie—Proclamation of M. Glais-Bizoin—Assassination of Marshal Prim.

CHRISTMAS, 1870, approached under circumstances of peculiar gloom for Europe. The weather was lowering and bitterly cold; and that, to the beleaguered inhabitants of Paris, and to the soldiers engaged in military operations in the field, implied additional suffering of no ordinary kind. France and Germany were still engaged in a deadly grapple, and the prospects of peace were vague and doubtful. Peace itself, under such conditions as those which were manifestly inevitable sooner or later, seemed an evil only less great than war. Italy was violently at issue with the Pope, and Spain was still torn with factious disputes as to the new form of government. Even England looked with anxiety to the progress of the great war across the Channel, and regarded with some apprehension the growing power and dictatorial ways of Prussia. This feeling of distrust was largely augmented, towards the close of the year, by an incident which, for a while at least, looked like a deliberate intention to insult and outrage this country. It became necessary, for military reasons, to impede the navigation of the Seine near Havre; and for this purpose the Prussian authorities seized, scuttled, and sank seven English colliers, which had been discharging coals under Prussian permits, and were taking in ballast to return. The Germans had recently been greatly annoyed by the French gunboats, which, starting from Havre or Quillebœuf, made reconnaissances up the stream as far as they could get in the direction of Rouen. In the latter part of December, one of these gunboats had advanced to within a short distance of Duclair, on the right or northern bank of the Seine, where a body of Prussians was at that time stationed. The situation of Duclair, which is a small port of no great consequence, is about midway between Quillebœuf and Rouen; and Quillebœuf is to the east of Havre. The Prussians, being very desirous of stopping the progress of the hostile vessel (which had already fired into them, killing 150), and finding the English colliers handy for the purpose, at once appropriated them. Thirty-nine of the crews of these ill-fated ships arrived on the 30th of December at the Sailors' Home in Wellclose Square, London; and the mates of the *Sylph* and *Alice*, both of Sunderland, made statements as to the facts of the case, from which it would seem that great and unnecessary violence was used towards our countrymen. The mate of the *Sylph*, Mr. Mingay, said:—

"The *Sylph* was at Rouen on Saturday [December 24th], in the river, when a detachment of about thirty or forty Prussian soldiers, headed by an officer, boarded her from a steam-tug. The *Sylph* had discharged her cargo of coals, and was taking in ballast. The men had—unfortunately for themselves, as it ultimately turned out—been paid. The Prussian officer addressed Captain Ramsdale (the owner of the vessel) and the mate, in a mixture of French and English. Striking his hand on the companion ladder, he said, 'Me must have your ship!' Captain Ramsdale, pointing to the flag, said, 'You shall not have my ship; it is an English ship.' The Prussian officer, whose men had at once proceeded to cut the ropes that tied her to her anchor, roared out, 'Me don't care if she is English, or French, or Dutch, or Norwegian. Me want her to *couler* her in the river.' He repeated the French word *couler* (to sink) several times, and announced his intention to seize the brigantine, whether its captain would permit him or not. During this animated altercation, the utmost confusion prevailed on board, the soldiers proceeding to knock holes in the bottom of the vessel. The captain cried out to the officer, 'If you want my ship, pay me the 2,000*l.* she's worth.' 'Yes,' said the officer, 'I will.' He then produced a printed form, and, calling for pen and ink, pointed to a vacant place on it, and directed the captain to fill it in, which he did. The form seemed to be an order on the Prussian Government. During the time this paper was being filled up, the sailors were trying to save what they could of clothes and money, but without much success, for in less than ten minutes from the boarding of the vessel the sailors were hurried over the sides into a boat, and cut adrift. A good deal of their clothing was left on board. The officer stepped on to the tug, leaving some soldiers in charge of the *Sylph;* these men hauled down the British flag (they had previously

ordered the captain to do so, but he had refused), and they trampled on it and wiped their feet on it, making remarks as they did so in German. They then floated her down the river. They did not sink her immediately—in fact, not till the next morning—but, getting drunk on the ship's stores, set her partially on fire."

At the time this statement was made, the sailors had received no compensation for their losses. At Rouen they reported themselves to the British Consul, who went to the Prussian authorities, and remonstrated. The men were then sent in omnibuses to Dieppe; and when they got to Colbec, between twelve and one at night, they were stopped in the bitter cold, with snow lying thickly on the ground, by a body of Prussian soldiers, who ordered them to get down, threatened them with their bayonets, and seized the men's tobacco, their clothing, and their money. Ultimately, they were allowed to proceed, and, on arriving at Newhaven, were so devoid of means that they had nothing to eat from the time of their landing in England until their reaching London. The mate of the *Alice* confirmed this account, stating that the vessels were seized in the most peremptory manner, and that the crews, on being put ashore, were obliged to remain exposed to the cold, and to rain which wetted them through, for eleven or twelve hours. According to one account—that of the *Times* correspondent at Havre, who seems to have been in communication with the sailors—the crews of three of the vessels were fired on.

The matter was of course at once taken up by the English Government, and a despatch, reciting the allegations of the sailors, and requiring explanations, was sent by Lord Granville to Versailles on the 29th of December. To this communication Count Bismarck replied on the 2nd of January, 1871, by an expression of grief and regret at the occurrence, accompanied by an assurance that full inquiry should be made, and compensation granted to the sufferers, if it was found to be deserved; and on the 8th of January he addressed a note on the same subject to the North German Ambassador in London. In the latter document he began by saying that he had not at that time received the report of the commander of that part of the German army by which the collier-ships were sunk in the Seine; but that he believed he was in possession of the general facts. "You are authorised, in consequence," he proceeded, "to say to Lord Granville that we sincerely regret that our troops, in order to avert immediate danger, were obliged to seize ships which belonged to British subjects. We admit their claim to indemnification, and shall pay to the owners the value of the ships according to equitable estimation, without keeping them waiting for the decision of the question who is finally to indemnify them. Should it be proved that excesses have been committed which were not justified by the necessity of defence, we should regret it still more, and call the guilty persons to account." The seizure of the vessels appears to have been technically justifiable, though the point is one on which there is some disagreement, as on most other matters of international law. The Berlin correspondent of the *Cologne Gazette*, referring to the question, remarked that the measure had occurred in time of war, and in waters which, after the expulsion of the French, were subject to the German military authorities. Trading vessels, added this writer, are not, like men-of-war, clothed with the exceptional property of being extra-territorial, and there is consequently a great difference between the confiscation of an English man-of-war and that of an English collier. The French authorities might have used the English ships as transports, and have availed themselves of the neutral flag as a cloak for their proceedings; and the German authorities were therefore obliged, argued their Berlin apologist, to prevent the employment of the colliers in the interests of the enemy, and, by sinking them, to block up the navigation. "The right of embargo," continued the correspondent, "is conceded by positive international law to every State, and has not unfrequently been exercised. There is no doubt that for this destruction of neutral property the fullest compensation must be made, and it will be given in the present case. In 1718 and 1732 the Spaniards did this to the fullest degree; whereas France, on seizing foreign ships as transports for the Knights of St. George, refused compensation. To the complaints of the ambassadors concerned, Louis XIV. replied that he had only exercised the right possessed by all sovereigns in ports dependent on them, and was not bound to give compensation, however long the detention of the ships might be. Many States have sought to protect their subjects by special treaties, or at any rate to ensure them compensation. In a treaty concluded by France in 1858 with the Republic of San Salvador, it was provided that, in case of embargo, there should be the fullest compensation for injury to private interests." The general accuracy of these views was admitted in England in most well-informed circles; but it is obvious that they left wholly untouched one very important part of the case.

The seizure of the colliers was probably within the terms and precedents of international law, and the payment of a fair indemnity was so far a sufficient compensation for the injuries inflicted. But

the sailors alleged that they were treated with violence and indignity; that they were robbed of personal property and money; and that the English flag was grossly insulted. It is true that the Prussians concerned denied these statements; but, when we consider the demoralising influence of war on its rougher and least-educated agents—especially in the case of a belligerent whose self-will has been intoxicated by perpetual success—the truth of the charges assumes a very strong colour of probability. The denial was a matter-of-course, and counts for very little; for it was not to be expected that the Prussian soldiers would admit that they had misconducted themselves, and thus incur the certainty of punishment. The imputed violence is only too much in keeping with the demeanour of the invaders towards the French peasantry throughout the war; and in disputed cases of this nature, general character may fairly be taken into account in considering the value of specific statements. There appears to be no ground for accusing the English sailors of a fraudulent misrepresentation of facts; and what they alleged must have been either true, or wilfully and wickedly false. The several accounts were consistent in the main facts, with the one exception of a discrepancy as to the date. The mate of the *Alice* said that the outrage was committed partly on the 21st and partly on the 22nd of December; the mate of the *Sylph* referred it to the 24th. But it would appear as if there were few things more difficult than to fix the date of an occurrence. The day on which several events of the Franco-Prussian war took place was differently stated directly afterwards, although the whole drama was played out before numerous witnesses, official and otherwise, who immediately reported to their chiefs or to the public. The allegations of the sailors, therefore, were not seriously impugned; and it appeared to many that Mr. Gladstone's Government exhibited an undignified readiness to assume the falsehood of the English accusations, and the truth of the German denial. It was not given to every one to attain the lofty composure of the *Times*, which, in a leading article published on January 3rd, before the facts were fully investigated, discarded the narrative of the men, asserted the "eager" desire of Count Bismarck "to consider most liberally any claims that might be advanced by shipowners or sailors," and made light of the hardships which it did not "presume to doubt" the latter had undergone, but which it could scarcely suppose had been "much more severe than all sailors have to undergo in the course of their rough life at sea. To be wet to the skin, and to be without food for half a day," concluded this easy philosopher, "are casualties that happen to many sturdy mariners who have no chance of claiming compensation from the Prussian Government." This was hardly the right tone to be adopted while the matter was yet awaiting judgment, by a fellow-countryman of the persons alleging that they had been wantonly and cruelly injured; but it must be admitted, on the other hand, that the extreme sympathisers with France in this country were equally imprudent and unjudicial in their denunciations of Prussia. At a meeting of those sympathisers, one of the speakers referred to the subject, and exclaimed, "Oh, for an hour of Chatham, Nelson, or Cromwell!"—to which one of the auditors responded, "Let us sink sixty Prussian ships!" Views such as these found no response in the bulk of the nation; though many felt that the government had shown too strong an indisposition to risk giving offence to Prussia, and too little inclination to assert the dignity of the country.*

This incident was a disagreeable feature in the English Christmas; but it was a trifling matter in comparison with the sufferings of France and Germany. By both those nations the agony of the time was acutely felt. The Germans, who make much of Christmas, were bitterly disappointed at the gradual fading away of all hope of seeing their soldiers back again for the great festival; the French counted the days between the existing time and famine, and saw no star within the darkness of the fate that compassed them. As the close of the year drew nigh, the French prisoners in Germany seemed inspired with a fierce desire for freedom. A conspiracy was discovered among the captives at Cologne, Coblentz, and Mayence, for a rising on the night of Christmas Day. Sixty thousand men were to mutiny on that day, to disarm the guards placed over them, and to fight their way back to France, where they calculated on assistance, especially in Alsace. The military and police authorities, however, were warned in time, and brought up such heavy reinforcements of infantry and artillery as to discourage the French from making the attempt. Many of the prisoners had previously asked whether they would be allowed to receive Christmas presents from France, and, this being permitted, boxes were forwarded to them, which were afterwards found to contain weapons, concealed in articles of clothing. The German authorities complained of the defiant and insolent demeanour of the French officers; and, in consequence of this, and of the endeavours to escape, many of them were sent to fortresses on the

* See Appendix xiv., p. 567, "The Sinking of English Colliers."



GENERAL VON TÜMPLING.

Russian frontier, so as to remove them as far as possible from France. The officers living in Germany on parole made their escape so frequently that it was found necessary to adopt stringent measures to prevent the evasion. It was therefore announced that ten officers would for the future be sent to a fortress for every one breaking his solemn engagement, and attempting to escape. The prisoners generally, it was stated, were quiet and contented until proclamations, bearing the signature of the French Government, were surreptitiously introduced into the fortresses where they were confined. Some particulars with reference to these matters were published in the German papers, which said:—

"Three French officers interned at Cologne were



BOMBARDMENT OF ST. DENIS.

sent on the 24th of December, under a strong escort, to the fortress of Lützen. They were suspected of having incited the privates encamped on the Wahnheath to a rising. A Rhenish German has been arrested at Oberhausen, and conveyed to Cleves, where he will be tried for having assisted several officers and men in their escape over the frontier. At Aix-la-Chapelle two persons who speak French have been apprehended, a number of daggers, ostensibly destined for Belgium, having been found in their possession. Two chests of chassepôts, addressed to Belgium, have also been confiscated at Aix-la-Chapelle. On Christmas Eve, two French lieutenants escaped from that town. A few days previously, two men, who pretended to be Belgian gun-dealers, were arrested there in the Cologne train, and thirty-two swords were found on them. On Christmas Day, two French officers, who had escaped from Dusseldorf, were apprehended at Elberfeld. At Eberhausen, a man has been taken into custody, charged on his own confession with having conveyed French prisoners of war over the frontier at Venlo. At Mayence, where there are 30,000 French soldiers exclusive of officers, precautions have been taken against an outbreak, some of the officers having given full information to the authorities of the plot which was on foot. Although the captives are allowed the same diet as German soldiers, and cook for themselves, they chafe under a discipline to which they are unaccustomed. The Prussian Government having directed an educational census of the French prisoners, it has been found that of the 1,854 prisoners encamped at Lingen, 624 can neither read nor write, 75 can only read, and a large number understand extremely little of either accomplishment. There are also some Bretons who are entirely ignorant of the French language."

In the occupied French provinces, likewise, the people began to give great trouble to their conquerors, and it was found necessary to make many arrests. At Rheims, the citizens were much annoyed at the Prussian regulation that no one was to go about the streets in the evening without a lantern. A hatter accordingly invented a covering for the head, which consisted of a lamp above and a hat below. He called it "the regulation hat;" but the German Prefect warned him that, if he continued to offer it for sale, he would be transported to Prussia. The following notice was also issued in the same city:—"Several persons having recently been arrested on account of the resistance which they offered to the patrols and sentries, it is hereby decreed that in future not more than three persons may collect together in the streets. Those who violate this order will be arrested and severely punished." In some quarters a system of "paternal government" was established, which, though probably productive of good, must have been galling to the subjected race. Some curious particulars of the energetic proceedings of the German Prefect of the Meuse, Herr Bethmann Hollweg, were given in the *Cologne Gazette*. This official (it was there related) inaugurated his rule by regulations designed to check the rinderpest. He next found it necessary to impose a fine of at least 80*l*. on the destruction of a railway, and of 16*l*. on damage to telegraph-wires, to be paid by the locality where the offence was committed. To provide against a scarcity of provisions in the districts traversed by the troops, he ordered the Mayor to collect considerable stores, by contract or otherwise, and, if necessary, to sell these to the inhabitants at reasonable prices. He also directed the re-opening of elementary schools, and invited the managers of lyceums and colleges to state whether those institutions likewise could not resume their operations. A few weeks later, he guaranteed the salaries of elementary teachers, and instructed the Mayor to pay them out of the incoming taxes. One of his earliest measures was the re-establishment of the post-office, which had entirely ceased its functions on account of the flight of the officials, or the requisition of horses and vehicles. In connection with this, the Mayors were directed to arrange for frequent inspection of the roads, and to report on necessary repairs, which were carried out at the expense of the German authorities. The communes were required, at the end of October, to furnish a statement of the requisitions of provisions, forage, horses, and carriages imposed on them; and such returns were afterwards to be made fortnightly. In the middle of November, the inhabitants were apprised that the Rhine and Marne Canal—the destruction of which on the 31st of August was said to have staved off for three months the bombardment of Paris, as otherwise the Prussian artillery would have been conveyed by it—was re-opened from Mauvages to Bar-le-Duc. All this was very well; but the trial of serious offences by the military tribunals of the foreigner must have been a terrible blow to the national pride.

The French do not ordinarily indulge in much festivity at Christmas, and in 1870 there was even less than usual, owing to the scarcity of food and the gloomy state of the country generally. The German army investing Paris, however, contrived to be tolerably merry, in spite of disadvantageous circumstances. There was a pause in active operations, and the soldiers feasted, and sang songs, and wished themselves back at home, and the war well over. It was believed that not one man serving before Paris was without a present sent to himself personally. These gifts arrived in wagon-loads, and a deputation from Dresden and Leipsic came

with them, to see that they reached their destination. Of course Christmas-trees abounded. A writer from the spot recorded :—

"I saw one large palm-tree strung with toys, and fruit, and sweetmeats, and illuminated where it stood, in a garden. The paths leading to it were lit with Chinese lanterns, and at half-past six o'clock on Christmas Eve the soldiers commenced dancing round it to the music of their regimental band. At these head-quarters there was a Christmas-tree, and music and dancing after dinner that day. In the absence of ladies, a heavy dragoon or a Uhlan did his best to lend feminine grace to the manœuvres of the ball-room. This was in a French château, with a French eagle, taken at Sedan, stuck on the top of a Christmas-tree cut from a French garden. Some corps found it more convenient to have their grandest celebration on the following evening. This was the case with the Queen's Regiment of Guards, now having their head-quarters at Sevran, and their *replis* and foreposts in close proximity to the French in the neighbourhood of the Forest of Bondy. Having accepted an invitation from the officers to spend Christmas evening with them, I found on my arrival that a portion of the entertainment was to be the distribution of the presents hanging on Christmas-trees in a farmhouse on the border of the forest. . . . . To the farmhouse, which was at a short distance from the advanced posts, we all went. It was a large building, and it was lighted up from basement to roof. Soldiers thronged every room, and in two of the apartments there were Christmas-trees. While we remained there, the foreposts were relieved, and it was curious to see the interest taken in the amusement by the sentinels arriving from the front. Even before they warmed themselves at the blazing wood fires, they entered, rifle in hand, to have a look at the green branches and miniature candles and toy confectionery, which reminded them of home and Christmas festivities. Children could not have stared with a greater degree of admiring wonder ; and, when the ornaments came to be handed about, the expectant anxiety could scarcely have been greater if the occasion were one of a distribution of the Iron Cross. When the distribution had come to an end, the men not on duty betook themselves to singing, and the officers returned to Sevran, where they and their guests dined at the military Casino. Sevran must have been visible at a distance of many miles, for through every window in the village there was seen the light of dozens of little coloured candles which burnt on the Christmas-trees."

In default of Christmas gaieties, the people of Paris and of the large provincial towns indulged in furious political discussions on the character of the Government and the conduct of the war. At one of the Paris clubs, a motion, signed by M. Ledru Rollin, was proposed, calling on the Ministers to renounce the idea of capitulation. This suggestion excited a tumult, and one of the speakers warmly opposed it as a calumny on the Government, which had never talked of capitulating. He taunted the "Reds" of Belleville with their cowardice at Creteil on the 30th of November, and was loudly applauded. At another club great fault was found with the Government for giving an appointment to the Intendant who provisioned Sedan, and for publishing in the *Official Journal* an article affirming their readiness to fight or to treat for peace on honourable conditions. This, it was remarked, was the language, not of a Republican Government, but of treason. "A Republican Government," said one enthusiastic orator, "ought to decree victory or death"—a sentiment which evoked thunders of applause. A succeeding speaker urged that battle should be given to the enemy before famine had weakened their bodies and damped their courage. He would allow the Government eight days to raise the siege. At this there were loud cries of "It is too much! Not eight days, but forty-eight hours." If the Government failed to do anything within that time, the agitators would make another demonstration at the Hôtel de Ville, and proclaim the Commune. This was a little before the sortie of December 21st. The Government knew the difficulties of the task better than these fire-eaters. Even at Bordeaux, the possible issue of the struggle began to be apparent with the waning year. The semi-official *Moniteur* of that city published an article which said :—"Events, in their rapid and ceaseless march, may soon bring back France to the question considered in September and at the beginning of November, and twice settled in the negative. Military occurrences which it is exceedingly painful to anticipate, but which it is necessary to have the courage to foresee—just as the doctor foresees in a disease the grievous accidents which call for new and supreme resources of his art—might so shut up General Ducrot's army under the forts of Paris and might so keep back the auxiliary army that their combined action would be out of the question. Thenceforth the question of the duration of the resistance of Paris, and, secondarily, that of the continuance of the war, would necessarily present themselves. The former, by the very fact of the investment which separates us from Paris, will be left to the defenders of the capital, who will certainly decide it in the sense of resistance, as long as this is humanly possible, through which in the end they might encounter limits to their resources, if not to their patriotism. The latter could only be determined with full authority by an Assembly ; but it is so closely connected with the other that it may be deemed inseparable from it. Paris and the provinces cannot be wanting to each other. As long as there is room for a concentrated

effort of their armies, let us beware of interrupting it, retarding it, or troubling it by diversions of another kind and of less urgency. As soon, however, as the military question is solved, the political question of the intervention of the country in its affairs by a National Assembly will immediately arise." This was the first intimation that, in the opinion even of the Bordeaux Delegation, or of its mouthpiece, the time might not be far distant when submission to the stronger would be no longer avoidable.

Meanwhile, the Government determined to use its lease of power for the promotion of its own party ends. A decree abolishing the General Councils of Departments, as well as the Councils of Arrondissements, was published at Bordeaux on December 27th. The place of the General Councils was to be taken by Commissioners, one from each canton; and each Commissioner was to be named by the Government, in accordance with the recommendations of the Prefects. When we bear in mind that the Councils thus done away with were veritable representative institutions, elected by universal suffrage, and that the Commissioners to be put in their places were merely official nominees, it will be seen that the Republic, for which factious agitators had clamoured and plotted in the days of the Empire, had committed as flagrant an outrage on freedom and popular right as any that had ever occurred in the most despotic times. To these newly-appointed Commissioners was assigned, amongst other duties, the control of the monetary matters of the departments; so that the taxation of the people for local purposes was taken out of the hands of the people's representatives into those of persons appointed by a Government which had been appointed by itself, and which had never, except in Paris, received any ratification of its powers from the constituencies. The act was one which, had it been committed by the Imperialists in the days of their power, would have been fiercely denounced by the very men who now resorted to it as a means of propping themselves in their very insecure positions; yet it was accepted by the country, because, at the moment, the duty of expelling the foreigner, if possible, was the one thought which engrossed men's minds, and because, with all his faults, Gambetta had exhibited an amount of energy, spirit, and resource, which pointed him out as the fittest man for a War Minister. It was very doubtful, however, if the existing Government as a whole, and the Republic as a form of rule, would have been supported by a majority, supposing the question to have been put to the vote all over the country. The lurking strength of the Imperialists in the provinces, and of the Orleanists in some of the towns, was always dreaded. The Municipal Council of Bordeaux, at the period now being described, voted a resolution, in which it was said that "the heroic efforts of the Government to drive out the Prussians and maintain the Republic" corresponded with "the aspirations of all honest and intelligent citizens," but that the action of the Government was not sufficiently seconded. The Buonapartists and reactionaries of all parties were denounced as criminals whom it was necessary to pursue and suppress; and the resolution then went on:—"The Government which has the extraordinary and supreme mission of repelling the invasion, which allows itself to be calumniated, depreciated, and enfeebled, and which suffers criminals to remain at large, creates anarchy, compromises all interests, and prepares civil war, its own ruin, and that of the nation. Our enemies neither keep their word nor observe treaties; they kill to rob; they wish to pillage, ruin, and dishonour France, and to take the possessions of the French to give them to the Germans. Buonapartists and reactionaries of all parties are their accomplices. France can only be saved by the Republic, by very considerable sacrifices, by extraordinary means, and by citizens whose acts prove their real devotion to the country. France possesses enormous resources, and it is the duty of the Government to combine them and render them effective. It is in its power to save France; but its resolutions must be commensurate with the necessities of the situation. The time for half measures has passed away; the hour of great resolutions has struck; it is indispensable that every obstacle to the national defence should be thrust aside."

The address of the Council was presented to M. Crémieux and M. Glais-Bizoin on the 22nd of December; and the former, speaking in the name of his colleagues, said that when, under the pressure of necessity, the Government of the National Defence first assumed the reins of power, their one object was to deliver the country from foreign invasion, without reference to political opinions. Hitherto they had accepted the co-operation of all men disposed to devote themselves to the work of national defence. They desired to pursue that course to the end, and then to deliver into the hands of the nation the administration of its own affairs. But, unfortunately, the Government had not always and everywhere met with that patriotic devotedness which it had a right to look for. There were men, from whom the country was warranted in hoping better things, who had failed in

their duty as citizens; and the lamentable consequence had been a weakening of the forces of the national defence, which justly provoked distrust of certain parties. The Government could not carry confidence so far as to tolerate proceedings which might compromise the destinies of the country. It was as ready as ever to accept the concurrence of all, but it would not assist treason to organise itself and hamper the national defence. Further than that, its duty was to maintain the confidence of public opinion in those who, in whatever rank, represented authority. However painful the exercise of this duty might be, the Government would mercilessly withdraw its confidence from all those not really worthy of it, and whose conduct did not come up to the legitimate requirements of public opinion.* Immediately following these utterances came the enforced resignation by General Loverdo of the functions he held in the Ministry of War as Director of the Infantry and Cavalry. At the time of the Revolution, this officer was at the head of a department in the War Office, under Palikao. He was found useful, first by Crémieux, and afterwards by Gambetta, as an assistant versed in military affairs, of which they were entirely ignorant; but he was thought to be deficient in energy, and Kératry, in a communication to Gambetta in November, denounced him as a Buonapartist traitor. The first fruit of the anti-Imperial crusade was his removal from office.

The Bordeaux Municipal Council offered to supply the Government with information, and exhorted it to take energetic measures. The feeling of the extreme democrats was that expressed in their famous formula, "The Republic is above universal suffrage"—a phrase which can only mean that the Republic has succeeded by inheritance to the mystical "Divine Right" of mediæval monarchies. M. Rochefort would have swept away every one appointed by the Empire. In the introduction to a new edition of certain portions of his *Lanterne*, he expressed great dissatisfaction at the retention of their posts by the judicial functionaries of the late Government. "Sullied," he said, "by pestilential decrees, they clung to their posts after the Revolution, uttering the lamentable cry, 'Dishonour me, but do not displace me.' If *I* had been master, I should have proposed to the Prussians on the 6th of September to give them all these people in exchange for a few bushels of potatoes. Unfortunately, I could do nothing but leave to them their places, and quit mine." In many respects, however, there were arbitrary acts enough to please M. Rochefort in his highest moods of demagogic exclusiveness and tyranny. At Marseilles, two wealthy inhabitants, found guilty of being absentees, were condemned to pay 3,000 francs and 1,000 francs per day, respectively, from the 1st of December, until they should return home, and take their share in the work of national defence; and in other parts of the country the hand of the self-created Administration was heavy on all acts and expressions of opinion unfavourable to its views.

The division between the large towns and the provinces had become so serious that a M. Devet actually put forward in the *Eclaireur* of St. Etienne, in the department of the Loire, a proposal to erect Paris into an independent State, quite distinct from the rest of the country. He insisted that this was the best and most practicable way out of a situation which had become intolerable. "Free-thinking Paris and the Catholic provinces," he argued, "have come to a point at which all accord between them is illusory. When the capital wants to go forward, the departments draw back, and complete stagnation is not far off. Let the provinces, then, hold to their gods, in whom Paris does not believe; let one respect what the other contemns. Beyond the Seine, God is Omnipotent; within it, He is only a myth which is a laughing-stock to everybody. Paris should therefore become a city apart, governing itself in its own fashion, and leaving to the provinces equal liberty. Everybody could thus go where his affinities led him. The Parisian believers in a God could go into the country to adore Him at their ease; the provincial sceptic to Paris to swell the ranks of Freethinkers. Paris would be a free Republic, while the provinces would choose a Buonapartist, Orleanist, or Legitimist Government, as they might think best. At present, Paris has to drag the cannon-ball" (a French military punishment) "of the Catholic provinces, while the latter are scandalised at being towed by an ultra-Voltairian city." There is a suggestion of irony in this proposal; yet, only a few months later, the division between the Commune and the "rural" Assembly at Versailles did in fact bring the country for a time into the very condition here imagined.

A fear lest the siege of Paris should destroy or injure some of the famous literary and art treasures with which the city abounds, was one of the strongest feelings influencing non-combatants as the period for commencing the attack approached. The Royal Irish Academy, and Trinity College, Dublin, in the course of December, requested the members of the Göttingen University to join them in advocating the exemption of the French capital, as a principal centre of culture, from bombardment.

* *Daily News* Bordeaux Correspondent.



WATCHING THE BOMBARDMENT.



IN PARIS—DISCUSSING THE LAST SORTIE.

The reply of Göttingen was to the effect that Paris, far from being exclusively devoted to culture, had wantonly undertaken many barbarous wars. Dublin University was told that she would have done better in protesting against the last of these murderous French raids; and it was added that, in the interests of culture, the frivolous ferocity of France must be restrained by the higher civilisation of Germany. The reply, which was signed by the pro-rector of the University, Dr. Dove, proceeded in a style of truculent boasting which is probably unparalleled. "I cannot refrain from saying," remarked this gentleman, "that, according to our German notion, whoever desires to arrest the avenging arm of justice is an accomplice in the crime. The German people, who in their intellectual aspirations are ever seeking to realise Paracelsus's proud remark—'English, French, Italians, follow me, not I you'—have been forced to leave the work of peaceful culture, the only field of their ambition, because, by a hostile attack, their dearest possessions, their national existence, their moral self-consciousness, their honour, were menaced. They are now fighting in France for the future security of this sacred possession, as also for the peace of the world and the morals of humanity; for these would be destroyed if the idea of requiting Justice could disappear from the consciousness of peoples. That the world retains the belief in this justice, it owes, next to God's grace, to the German people. When Europe had not the moral courage to prevent a wanton breach of the peace, this people, awaiting the righteous judgment in the thunder of battles, put its existence at stake. It has sent out the intellectual flower of its youth to the sacred struggle, which a great English historian has justly described as the struggle of the Archangel against Belial." To read this extraordinary outburst of defiant vanity, one might suppose that there had been no such episodes in German history as the desolating attacks on the Roman Empire by the old Gothic races; the conquest of Gaul by the Franks, and of Britain by the Saxons; the fraudulent and aggressive wars of Frederick the Great; the division of Poland; the subjection of Italy to the systematised selfishness of Austria (then emphatically a German Power); the campaigns of Austria and Prussia at the time of the first French Revolution, undertaken with the express intention of putting down the new ideas in politics; the armed menace to all Europe of the Holy Alliance; the repeated attacks on Denmark; and the sudden descent of Prussia on Austria in 1866. One would imagine, too, that all the blame of the Franco-German war lay with France; that Germany had never hungered after Alsace and Lorraine; that German newspapers, poets, and prose writers had never said an uncivil word about the French people; that Prussia had not been preparing for war on the most gigantic scale known to modern times, and that she had not secretly encouraged the candidature of the Prince of Hohenzollern, with a full knowledge that, when discovered by France, it would provoke a collision. It cannot be too often repeated, for the sake of the truth of history, and of the future peace of the world (if such a thing be possible), that the Franco-Prussian war was the fault of both combatants, if not in equal measure—that it was the renewal of an old quarrel of two jealous and intractable nations over vague and disputed boundaries. Dr. Dove, however, could only see one side of the question. In the conclusion of his reply, he tauntingly reminded England of her great past, "when the British sword was laid in the scale in every terrible conflict for the true interests of humanity—for the justice, peace, and liberty of Europe;" which is doubtless to be understood as a reference to the days when England, in alliance with the other Continental Powers, poured out blood and treasure in resisting the ambitious schemes of Napoleon. Finally, the English *literati* were exhorted to pronounce strongly "against the violation of the principle of neutrality by the conduct of their Government respecting the trade in arms, against the sapping of the principle of international law by the rulers of France, and in favour of the inculcation in those rulers of the sense of justice and morality—inviolability of private property at sea, &c." These last were the questions which added gall and venom to the German remarks on English neutrality.

Setting aside the gross rudeness and unmannerly style of this reply to the Dublin University, and the irrelevant character and false arguments of the issues collaterally raised, it must be admitted that the Germans had much to say in defence of their proposed bombardment of Paris. If war be allowable at all, it cannot be denied that the challenged has a perfect right to seek the challenger in his principal stronghold, and to strike him there as hard as he can. The guilt of the war lay much more with Paris than with the French provinces; and while the latter were suffering the utmost miseries of a hostile state, it was not just to demand that the former should be spared anything which comes within the legitimate scope of warfare. The bombardment of a great and beautiful capital is of course a terrible event, whether considered with reference to humanity or to intellect; but, the state of war being established, such a course may become a necessity. After all, it is not so dreadful

as the slow reduction of a town by famine; and it was probably hoped by the Prussians that their fire, when once opened, would hurry the catastrophe, and thus reduce the mortality caused by hunger.

One of the most curious revelations of personal views on the progress of the war (if genuine) was that which a correspondent of the *New York Times* asserted that he had obtained from the Queen of Prussia. In her Majesty's opinion, according to this writer, it was unfair to cast the sole blame of the war on the French Emperor, who had not premeditated or desired the conflict. The war, she affirmed, was due to the intrigues and machinations of the different political parties—the Orleanists as well as the two extreme factions of Reactionists and Red Republicans. The Emperor was censurable for yielding to the desire, prevalent among Frenchmen generally, for winning back the prestige which had been lost in 1866. But he was dragged into the war; he did not originate it. The Queen added that she was satisfied, from a conversation she had had with M. Benedetti shortly before the rupture, when he was at Coblentz, on his way to Kissengen on leave of absence, that, if the Emperor had then had any intention of provoking hostilities, or believed in their being proximate, he would not have given M. Benedetti permission to quit his post. The Emperor, therefore, did not himself wish to pick a quarrel with Prussia: he was too well aware of the perils to which it would expose his dynasty. The Hohenzollern question was seized upon as a pretext by the factions into which France was split; some of the members of the Government played into their hands, and the Emperor was compelled to yield to the current of popular feeling. On the correspondent asking whether her Majesty thought there was any probability of a modification being effected in the conditions insisted upon by Count Bismarck as the price of peace, she replied, "It is not merely the present that we have to consider; our future security necessitates the imposition of terms which we might otherwise shrink from exacting. At the same time, I trust that they will be of such a character as to leave no rankling feeling of humiliation, and no temptation for the renewal of the struggle. God knows that the thirst of conquest has no share in the decisions of the King and his advisers. They may be mistaken in their estimate of what is necessary in the shape of guarantees; but if they err in this regard, they do so from conviction." The Queen contemplated with great emotion the prospect of the bombardment of Paris—not only on account of the dreadful loss of life and destruction of property it would entail, but because of the feeling of permanent animosity which it would implant in the French mind. After such a measure, the French would be certain to nurse a desire of vengeance, and to plan measures of retaliation. Her Majesty appeared to the correspondent to suggest—though she expressed herself reservedly—that she had had some influence in postponing the bombardment of the French capital. Of the King she remarked that he did not bear his fatigues as well as was generally supposed. "Whatever," she proceeded, "may be said of his eagerness to enter upon this campaign, I can assure you that he was not only averse to it, but physically ill-prepared for it. His health is not of the best, and he has arrived at a period of life when exposure and privations are not good for him. The hardships he has undergone—for I can assure you he has had his share of them—have told so much upon him that he, of all men, should be desirous of bringing the campaign to a speedy conclusion. Nothing but the necessities of a policy which render imperative effective guarantees for the future, would, you may be sure, induce him to persevere in enforcing conditions which may indefinitely prolong it." Being complimented by the correspondent on the admirable organisation of the Augusta Hospital in Berlin, the Queen replied that only a small part of the merit was due to herself, for that almost all the improvements introduced into the German hospitals were borrowed from the examples set by the Americans during the War of Secession. The opinion, expressed in some quarters, that it was the intention of Prussia, at the close of the war, to send the French Emperor back to Paris at the head of the troops at that time prisoners in Germany, her Majesty described as "very foolish," and without a shadow of foundation. "All that has been done for the Emperor's comfort," she said, "has been done by myself personally, and without any ulterior motive whatever. I felt, as every one in my situation must have felt, that a man who has occupied so exalted a position as the late ruler of France could not be treated as an ordinary captive. As to the 'state' by which he is said to be surrounded, it is of the simplest possible character, and very little different from that of any private gentleman. The officers who are with him are prisoners like himself, and they are allowed to stay at Wilhelmshöhe as a matter of courtesy. Of course, we might have gratified the Emperor's enemies by depriving him of the society of the former members of his household, and of that of the officers who are personal favourites of his; but this would have been conduct unworthy of a great nation like Germany, and would no doubt have been made a subject of historical reproach to it in

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the future. As regards the Empress, I feel the sincerest commiseration for her misfortunes." Such was the report of the American writer. Its authenticity was denied by the Prussian Government; yet it may not have been wholly baseless.

Whatever the Queen of Prussia may have said—supposing her to have spoken at all—on the last topic, it cannot be questioned that the idea of a restoration of the Emperor was for a time considered and discussed by King William and his advisers; though probably the design was never actually resolved upon. The strange negotiations in which Marshal Bazaine and Count Bismarck were concerned, while the former was yet shut up in Metz, were in themselves sufficient to show that the suggested arrangement received some degree of attention at the Prussian head-quarters. But this was not all. After the revolution of September, the Prussian official and semi-official papers were often very complimentary to the fallen potentate, and were fond of contrasting him favourably with his Republican successors. The *Moniteur Officiel* of Versailles—the authorised organ of the German rule temporarily established there—frequently quoted with approval from *La Situation* of London, the representative (in an unacknowledged way) of the Imperial party, and also warmly defended Bazaine from the charge of treachery. On Christmas Day, 1870, the Versailles *Moniteur* contained an article from the *Situation*, which openly advocated the discussion of terms between Prussia and the Empress Regent. The mutilation of France, it was urged by the French writer in London, would put an end to all possible alliance between France and Germany; but Prussia could not renounce that mutilation unless, on quitting France, she left behind her a Power strong enough not to swerve from a sworn engagement. The Empire alone could make Prussia dispense with conquest, and permit her to reduce her pretensions to a rectification of frontiers; for the Empire alone could confer with Prussia on that great remodelling of the map of Europe which the conduct of the neutrals had rendered indispensable as much to the tranquillity of Germany as to the reconstitution of France. To these observations of the *Situation*, the Versailles *Moniteur* made the following remarkable response:—"Thank God, we are not driven to wish that the Prince Imperial had already passed the years which separate him from manhood! The prisoner of Wilhelmshöhe still lives; it is Count Bismarck who has said so, and the Chancellor of North Germany has said nothing useless. The Empress Regent, become great by three months of trials and fervent prayers, has not, as we know, lost the blood of the Cid which runs in her veins, and we do the men of the Empire the justice of believing that if they have been courageous enough to submit to abstention, as long as their sovereign has said to them 'Be still!' they will be devoted enough to incur all responsibility when they will be told 'March!'" The precise degree of "inspiration" which animated these remarks is of course unknown, but that they were not wholly without warrant may certainly be assumed. Count Bismarck doubtless determined nothing while the war was yet in progress, and in the end the Empire was *not* restored; but among other solutions of the difficulties of the time, it is clear that this particular one was not excluded from the Royal councils.

The French made many complaints of the tyrannical conduct of the Prussians. They asserted that a German sentinel shot at and mortally wounded Dr. Potier-Duplessis, chief of the Ambulance of Sedan, while wearing the *brassard* of Geneva; and a writer from the north-east of France related to one of the English newspaper correspondents several instances of arrogant demeanour. He alleged that the Prussian officers at Sedan required that every one should salute them on entering a café, and should remain uncovered; but he added that, one of these officers having struck an old gentleman who had not done so, the Commandant, in response to a formal complaint, forbade the officers to act in such a manner. Another whim of theirs, according to the same informant, was to insist that no one should spit when smoking a cigar; and at one time they threatened with arrest any person selling newspapers.

In front of Paris the besiegers occupied themselves, during their brief Christmas feastings, in calculating how soon the French metropolis would be compelled to capitulate from sheer hunger, to say nothing of the bombardment. The prospect was not so encouraging for the Germans as it had appeared shortly before. The French soldiers taken prisoners in the last sorties were all well-nourished; and four German officers who had been captured outside Paris, and who were afterwards exchanged, stated that nothing could have been better than their treatment while under detention. They were in Paris for some days, but not on prison fare or meagre rations. One of these officers (says a letter from the head-quarters of the Saxon Army Corps at Le Vert Galant) "had dined with two French generals, and the dinner and dessert were excellent. Several dishes of meat were served, two of them being roast beef and veal. He was taken about to different restaurants, and his bill at those establishments, as well as his carriage-hire, was paid by his

gaolers. But that is not all. No amount of misfortune makes a French gentleman forget that courteous consideration for which he is so eminently remarkable. It was suggested that it would not be convenient for the German officers to go about Paris in their uniform, and each prisoner was presented with 1,000 francs to provide himself with a *mufti*. All this was done in the handsomest manner—in such a way that the officers could not decline. The attentions were offered with a delicacy that forbade refusal." There was a good deal of policy in all this. The Parisians were glad of an opportunity to show that they were not by any means reduced to desperation; and of course they took care to put the best aspect of things, and the best only, before the besiegers. It is quite certain that food was now getting short in Paris, though the worst was yet some weeks off. The soldiers, probably, were better served than the rest, because of the work they had to perform; but all had to put up with make-shifts, and to dispense with some of the comforts of happier times. The Prussians, however, were puzzled as to the exact amount of provisions in Paris. They had recently over-estimated the scarcity; their tendency was now to go to the other extreme.

The camp at Conlie continued to drill its raw recruits while Paris was awaiting bombardment, and the provinces were trying to reach out a helping hand to the capital. In the middle of December there were nearly 50,000 men there, though only 20,000 of them were armed. The way the officers managed was to drill the men by battalions, and to shift the rifles from one battalion to another, so that every soldier had a weapon in his hand once a day. The men were not very well fed, and were obliged to sleep through the cold nights in tents on faggots covered with straw, their bodies wrapped up in sheep-skins, goat-skins, rugs, and overcoats. The discipline was bad, and the men did pretty well what they liked. Although strict orders had been given not to permit any strangers to enter the camp, unless provided with proper certificates showing that they had come to visit relatives, numbers of persons not duly qualified got in, by virtue of wearing a uniform, as there was no password, and the commanders of outposts were allowed to act as they thought proper in the matter. The camp was about six miles in circumference, and was surrounded by a rampart of earth, and defended by two redoubts, one facing the west, and the other the south. It was said that much more energy in all the arrangements of the camp was exhibited during the time of Count de Kératry than under his successor. On the 10th of December, M. Glais-Bizoin reviewed the troops in camp, and afterwards issued the following proclamation:—

"At the moment when the Minister of War leaves for the Army of the Loire, I desired to come among you, my brave compatriots assembled at the camp of Conlie. I am happy and proud, after the review of all the troops held this morning in my presence by your commanders, to attest loudly that Brittany, so brave outside Paris and before Orleans, continues to give to France—for she took the initiative—a noble example of patriotism, by the formation and development of the camp of Conlie. I desire to make known to France that 48,000 citizen soldiers, all equipped, have hastened in less than five weeks to the call of the country, and are here ready to face the enemy, whilst 12,000 of their compatriots have already left the camp to march to the front. I should be wanting in respect to truth and justice if I did not remind my country that this initiative is due to my former colleague and friend, General de Kératry, its execution to the triple energy of the General-in-Chief and the Generals Carré Kérisoüet and Le Bonëdec, seconded by a meritorious staff of officers. It is a debt of gratitude which I permit myself to discharge as a member of the Government. . . . . Soldiers, your good appearance and your resolution show me that you will remain faithful to the old device of our fathers—Death sooner than dishonour! The national unity, the precious bequest of our fathers, you will preserve, dear and brave compatriots, and will transmit intact to your descendants. I leave you then as you received me, with a cry of 'Long live France! Long live the country!'—a cry which signifies at this moment, 'Long live the Republic, and deliverance from the foreigner!'"

Of all the provincial populations of France, certainly none did better or more courageous service than that of Brittany.

An additional shadow was cast over the close of the year by a tragical event occurring at Madrid, which, as it was connected with the incident out of which the war arose, should be here chronicled. Prince Amadeus of Savoy, second son of the King of Italy, embarked at Spezzia on December 28th to take possession of the crown of Spain, to which he had been elected by the Cortes in November. On the evening of the very same day, Marshal Prim, who had been mainly instrumental in placing the young Prince on the throne, was shot by six men while in his carriage, returning from the Cortes to his own house. His aide-de-camp was severely wounded at the same time. Prim died on the evening of the 30th, on which day the new King of Spain landed at Cartagena, and was met with the doleful intelligence of what had happened. Amadeus entered Spain beneath the shadow of a crime, committed by the more extreme members of political factions opposed to himself, and to the man who had brought him there.

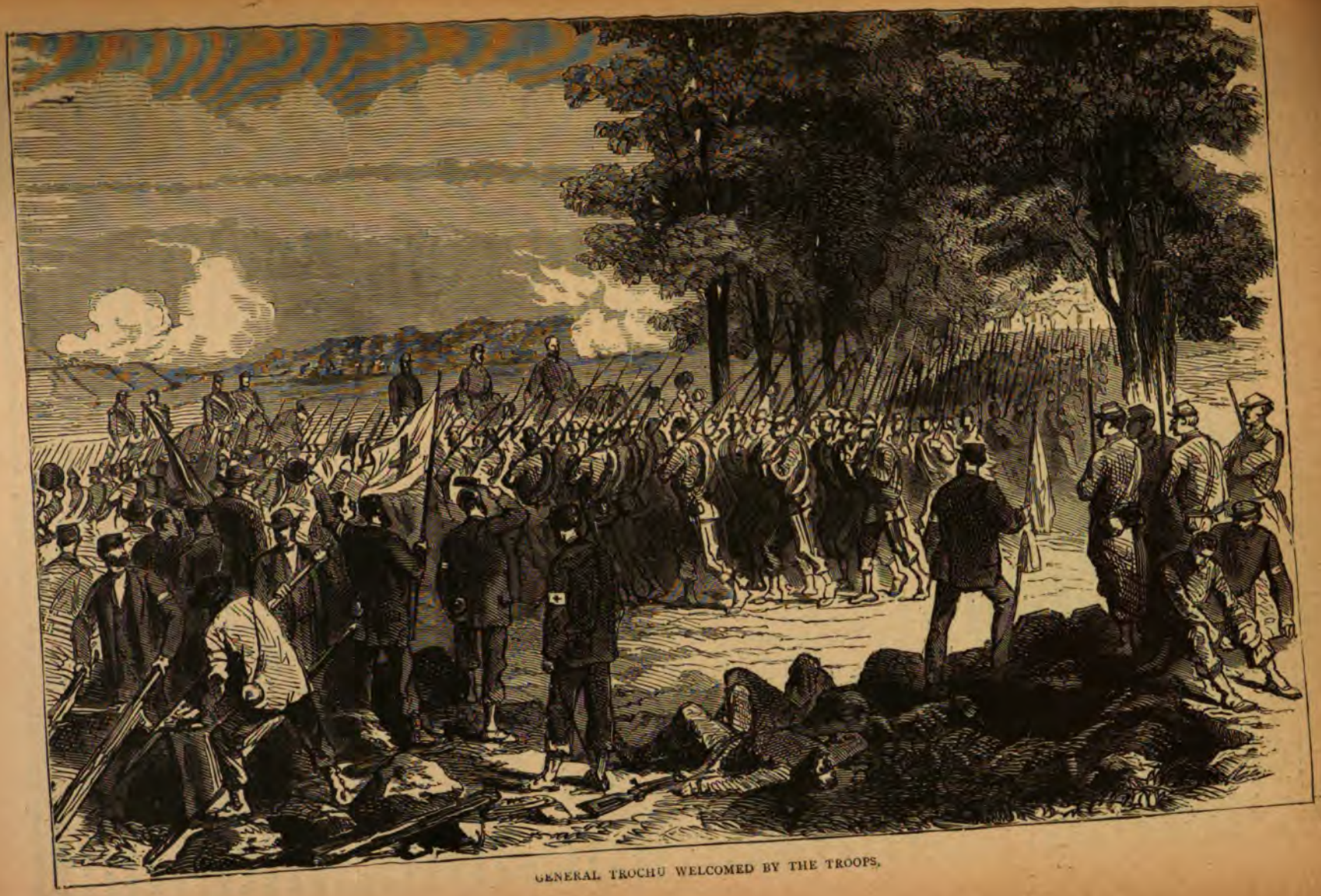


GUSTAVE FLOURENS.

CHAPTER VIII.

Signs of the Approaching Bombardment—The French increasing the Strength of their Works—Shells of Extraordinary Range—Difficulties of the Bombardment, and Reasons for the Delay—German Attack on Mont Avron—Position of German Batteries—The French taken by Surprise—Vigorous Fire during December 27th—State of Affairs on the 28th—The Fort abandoned by the French—Entry of the Saxons on the 29th—Horrible Condition of the Ground—Formal Opening of the Siege of Paris—Bombardment of Various Forts—Effects of the Fire on Nogent and Rosny—The Plateau of Avron—Reasons for Expelling the French from that Position—Influence of the Bombardment on Parisian Opinion—Growing Discontent with General Trochu—French Designs and Strategy—Panic among the Troops—Scarcity of Fuel in Paris—Proclamation of the Government on the Subject—The *Drapeau* on the Blunders of the Republic—A Defence of the Empire—The Right and Wrong of the Matter—Fears of Anarchy—A Question of Morals—Reasons for the Inaction of the French Fleet.

THE bombardment of Paris was now approaching. The French themselves seemed to anticipate that it could not be much longer delayed; and they accordingly increased the strength of their own works, in order that they might be able to inflict the greatest amount of damage possible on their enemy. Dr. Russell, of the *Times*, gave an account, in the course of December, of some new works in progress below Mont Valérien (to the west of Paris), and remarked that General Trochu appeared to be forming a vast entrenched camp under the guns of the fort, into which he suggested that perhaps he intended to retire when Paris was nearly starved out, and the people were becoming troublesome. The fort, he stated, was in itself a little town; it was safe from the German fire, and it commanded



GENERAL TROCHU WELCOMED BY THE TROOPS.

Paris. The entrenchments were of vast extent, and could only have been constructed by a large expenditure of labour. Several redoubts and rifle-pits gave external support to the greater work, and the whole was capable of covering a large army. The force and range of the French guns increased continually. On the 23rd of December, Mont Valérien threw a shell across the Seine to St. Germain, a distance of six miles. Dr. Russell occasionally saw these shells explode, and he has described, in his usual style of graphic power, the terrific effect of one of them. It struck the opposite bank of the Seine, and threw up "an eruption of earth and fat smoke," forming a tremendous crater. A dog close by flew round and round in wild circles, barking with fright. A French peasant came and stared into the gaping hole, and then another, and then a number of Prussian soldiers; finally, a Frenchman got into the crater, and was buried up to the neck. The same writer stated very clearly why the bombardment had not been already commenced. It had been an impossibility. The detached forts surrounding the city, the earth-works, covered by advanced redoubts, which had been erected by the Parisians since the earlier days of the war, and the line of continuous ramparts, had presented such a formidable front that the Prussians had hitherto refrained from the attack, not having guns of sufficient force to overcome these obstacles. Although, remarked Dr. Russell, the forts were constructed before the days of rifled artillery, they were placed so as to command, in most instances, the sites on which an enemy could plant his batteries against them, even with rifled guns. The Germans had made no preparations for a serious siege, and their guns, which had to be brought from remote arsenals, were hardly equal to those in the forts. Batteries might have been erected during the summer, while the trees, being in full leaf, would have concealed the operation; but at that time the requisite material was not at hand; and now that the front of the lines was exposed, the German works, with a few exceptions, were at the mercy of the Parisian fire. The French guns, as already stated, were exceedingly powerful, and the stores of ammunition were evidently very great. Nothing is more certain than that the Germans at first thought to take Paris by the mere terror of their presence. They entrenched, and to some extent fortified, themselves in front of the great city, to guard against attack from the besieged; but for a long time they did little or nothing towards the reduction of the place. On the other hand, the Parisian garrison seized upon important sites which the investing army had neglected or abandoned. Describing the state of things on the 20th of December, Dr. Russell said:—

"At Villejuif, the French bulged out the line of investment, and protruded a redoubt on a plateau which the Sixth Corps desisted from assaulting because it was covered by the forts below. And now they are working on the spur outside Valérien, in order to make counter approaches to the works which have been revealed to them as winter has sharpened the profiles of the landscape. I have repeatedly indicated the complete mastery of Todleben's system of defence which General Trochu's engineers have displayed. They cover their weak points by advances against the lines of their enemy. The point at which the French fancied Paris was weakest was the scene of the sorties of November 30th and December 2nd. It is not true, as was stated, that they hold Champigny, or that they fortified themselves there; but it is the fact that they have converted that weak front into one of the strongest parts of their defence. Charenton, with Vitry on its right, across the Seine, and Nogent and the Faisanderie on its left flank, cannot be shaken to pieces by any blowing of trumpets. The ground from Nogent to St. Denis, which would appear to be still weaker as a defensive position, has been strengthened by the occupation of Mont Avron, in front of Rosny; and from that point to St. Denis the line of ground, which forms a re-entering angle towards Paris, presents no facilities for the besiegers' batteries. The Prussian line is again bulged outwards very greatly by the protrusion of the town of St. Denis, with its formidable Fort de l'Est on one side, and Fort de la Briche on the other. Just at the Fort de la Briche, the Seine, flowing nearly due northwards out of Paris, takes that singular sweep which guarantees the west of the city against attack. In the top of the loop of this bend of the Seine stands Genevilliers, opposite Argenteuil, and at its base, where a line drawn east and west from Puteaux to Rueil, so as to touch the east and the west banks of the river, is little more than three miles long, stands Fort Valérien. From the junction of the Marne and Seine, near Alfort (where the united streams enter Paris), to the outflow of the Seine from Paris at Bas Meudon—a distance of about six miles—the south of the city is covered by Fort Bacchus, Fort Vitry, Fort Bicêtre, Fort Montrouge, Fort Vanvres, and Fort Issy; but the defensive line is carried out to an angle at Villejuif by the redoubt which is placed a mile south of Bicêtre. Thus, if the Germans work up in the peninsula of the Seine between St. Cloud and Bougival, they are blocked by Valérien; but as it is plain ground, and is not interrupted by the river, they might establish batteries against Valérien if they were let alone. Foreseeing this, the French some time ago began their system of counter-approaches, as at Villejuif and Avron, and thus we see the counterparts of the Mamelon, the Selinginski and Volhyninski redoubts, and the Quarries at Sebastopol, under our eyes again."

The Prussian preparations being at length ready, the bombardment of the outer forts was commenced

by an attack on Mont Avron, the newly-constructed work to the north-east of Paris, which had proved so troublesome to the Germans during the late sorties. On the morning of December 27th, fire was first opened on it. A heavy descent of small snow filled and darkened the air, and the German gunners could not see the object at which they were aiming. But they had got their sights and ranges the day before, and their shots told as well as if the fort were visible. Nothing could exceed the regularity of the German fire; that of the French was intermittent, but exceedingly violent and rapid while it lasted. Some of the other French forts joined in, and the air was tortured by the infernal uproar. The besiegers' batteries in front of Raincy enfiladed the batteries and parallels of Mont Avron, throwing in a flanking fire of the most formidable nature. The French had neglected to secure the ground to the right and left of the fort, and their enemies seized it with characteristic readiness. It was only late on the night of the 26th that the Saxon army received orders to open fire on the French from guns in position, and even then all was not complete. Two thousand men were still at work, and they continued their toils through the night. Thirteen batteries were prepared, and the positions selected for them were Noisy-le-Grand, Pressoir, and Maison Gyot, in the wood of Montfermeil and Raincy. Five batteries were erected at Noisy, two at Pressoir, two at Maison Gyot, and four at Raincy. The guns were 24-pounders and 12-pounders—the former steel Krupps, and the latter rifled guns which had been made out of smooth-bores. The labour of constructing these batteries had been immense; for the ground was frozen six inches deep, and it was necessary to perform the work in secrecy. Under cover of trees and walls, the cautious Germans quietly got their batteries into position; and not until they were ready to open the bombardment did they remove the intervening objects which had masked their proceedings. The trees had been half sawn through, and at a given signal they were suddenly felled, and the guns immediately opened fire. When the French found themselves enfiladed, their astonishment was great, as they had no idea that the Germans had for some time past been approaching them from the side. It soon became evident that their position had been rendered untenable; but they did not give up without a struggle. The firing on both sides continued all day long, but was heaviest from twelve to two. The French fire then slackened, and at sunset it was extremely weak, though the force of the German bombardment had suffered no serious diminution. At five in the evening every gun in each of the German batteries had fired fifty rounds; while, on the other hand, the French had done some execution among their adversaries, twenty-three of the Saxon gunners being killed and wounded, notwithstanding that they were protected by solid parapets seven feet high. The French themselves lost heavily, especially among their officers, and the sickening mutilation of some of the dead testified to the dire efficiency of the German weapons. The batteries at Noisy-le-Grand threw shells into Neuilly, because, as it was stated, large bodies of French troops were in the habit of assembling there for sorties. When, some hours after dark, the Germans ceased firing, they had reason for supposing that they had produced a great effect; but they did not imagine they were so near success as shortly proved to be the case.

Prince George of Saxony went to Chelles early on the morning of the 27th, to view the bombardment; but, owing to the thickness of the air, very little was to be seen, and that which, had the day been clear, would have been a sight of extraordinary grandeur, was reduced to comparatively insignificant proportions, as far as the eye was concerned. The ear, however, was powerfully appealed to, and the sentiment of peril was certainly not wanting. The *Daily News* correspondent accused the French of "refining" on the ordinary and permitted horrors of war. He said he had seen a chassepôt bullet—one that had never been fired—which looked all right outside, but which, when dissected, was found to be in seventeen pieces, curiously jagged and angular. Each side, however, taxed the other with breaches of the Geneva Convention; though it is difficult to see, on grounds of reason, what the objection can be to these particular means of dealing death and destruction to an enemy. The engines employed in modern warfare are so terrific in their effects that it seems a ridiculous punctilio to strain at any addition to the diabolical armoury which science can invent. Why a chassepôt, a mitrailleuse, an explosive shell, or a Krupp gun, should be allowable, and an explosive bullet be denounced as really too cruel for the tender consciences of civilised belligerents, it is not easy to conjecture.

The Germans resumed their fire against Fort Avron on the 28th; but the French replied so feebly that their adversaries soon found that they also might slacken. The fact was that during the night of the 27th the French, seeing they could no longer hold the position, had partially evacuated the fort. This continued during the 28th; the guns were removed or spiked, and towards the end of the day Avron was silent. By nightfall, German

patrols went close up to its walls, but neither saw nor heard anything to show that it was occupied. On the afternoon of the 29th the patrols groped their way up the sides of the fort, and brought back word that no French were there. The village of Bondy was likewise found to be silent and deserted; so were Villemanble, Neuilly, and some other villages in the same direction; and all were immediately occupied by the Saxons. As these positions had been in possession of the French up to the day before, it will be seen at a glance that the French line outside Paris had contracted, on the eastern side of the city, to a serious degree. After dark on the evening of the 29th, a small party of soldiers set out for Mont Avron, passing in the frosty moonlight through the village of Villemanble. Several handsome châteaux, lying in ruins in their open grounds, were seen on the road: they had been struck by the frightful projectiles launched by the opposing forces at one another. On the slope of Avron the road bent to the left, the hill being steep; and here, among the trees and brushwood, about half-way up the ascent, was the line of the French vedette-posts. The ground was thickly covered with barricades, entrenchments, rifle-pits, and loopholed houses; and had the Germans endeavoured to take the hill by assault, the loss of life would have been great. After a long march, the little party reached the crest of the hill, on the side which looks out on Montfermeil. Inside the batteries a ghastly scene was revealed to the spectators. The earth was ploughed up by shells, the embrasures were broken in, the parallels were nearly obliterated, the dead lay about in fantastic groups. The *Daily News* correspondent with the Saxon army gave a very powerful description of the terrible sight. He wrote:—

"One slides and stumbles over a little ice-puddle. The ice blushes up red in his face—it is frozen human blood. Behind the batteries, and inside the breastworks, the dead lie thick. Dead! No man who has long followed this war but must be so familiar with the aspect of slain men that the original thrill and turn of the blood at the sight is a memory of the past at which he all but smiles. But the terrible ghastliness of these dead transcends anything I have ever seen or even dreamt of in the shuddering nightmare after my first battle-field. Remember how they were slain. Not with the nimble bullet of the needle-gun that drills a minute hole through a man and leaves him undisfigured, unless it has chanced to strike his face; not with the trenchant sabre-cut of the dragoon; not with the sharp stab of the bayonet; but slaughtered with missiles of terrible weight, shattered into fragments by explosions of many pounds of powder, mangled and torn by massive fragments of iron. There lay behind one of the embrasures a form utterly headless. I suppose the shell had struck the hapless being full in the face, and carried head and throat before it in its fierce rush. The guillotine could not have performed the operation more cleanly.

"But what need to dwell in detail on such a topic? Let it suffice that there lay the unburied and abandoned dead among the snow stained with their blood, and with the depressions in those ghastly faces turned up to the calm moonlight, drifted up by the snowflakes which had fallen since they had been shot down. When will they be buried? When will these wan faces cease to look up into the eyes of the moon, in silent but eloquent protestation against the institution called war? When will the stray human fragments over which one stumbles as he goes be gathered together, and their ghastliness be hidden beneath friendly earth? Not yet. Men will not dig graves as if they were blasting tunnels, and the earth is as hard as the bowels of Mont Cenis. The corpses on Mont Avron must lie there till a thaw comes. How long after, it would be rash to prognosticate. That gruesome group in the camp here, who had been sitting round the fire when the shells came and burst in it, and blew one and all of them into the other world, must remain as it is—a horrible mockery of conviviality—for a time at least. To look at the group from a little distance one would conclude that its members, lying or seated in a circle, were hobnobbing genially round a common pot, or eating out of one dish. Come nearer, and look inside that ring of squatting men, or what once were men. I care not how inured you are to sights of horror, you will turn away sick and scared from that circle of carnage.

"Behind the batteries, beside the relics I have alluded to, were found many evidences of the precipitation with which the French had evacuated the position. There were lots of wine—we drank some of it standing there among the dead—and piles of loaves, which the Saxon soldiers skewered on their bayonets. Both in and about the camp, lying farther back, there was a considerable quantity of rice, and also many blankets, shoes, and soldiers' knapsacks. Lumps of horseflesh lay about, or hung on cross-sticks. Investigations amongst the tents and mud huts brought to light bottles of rum and bags of peas. The ground was strewn with chassepôts, and behind the batteries, as well as in the battery magazines, were gunpowder-bags, containing each a charge, as well as many projectiles. The camp, and indeed the whole of the plateau, bore numerous traces of lengthened occupation. The French are the beastliest campers in the world, and they seem to have been exceptionally beastly in Mont Avron. Behind the camp lay the little straggling village of Avron, still smoking from the fire that raged in it during the morning—whether kindled by a Prussian shell or by the last Frenchman, I do not know. There was not a sign of life on all the plateau, except a lurching cur who gnawed something under a wagon—what it was there were reasons that prevented me from investigating too closely."

The guns, according to a despatch from the

Crown Prince of Saxony to King John, were removed by the retreating French to Noisy; and the garrison, said the Prussian monarch to his consort, "fled into Paris." A French officer who left the capital by balloon on the 30th with M. Ducoux, a former Prefect of Police, reported that on that day the French believed they had "gloriously repulsed" the attack on Mont Avron, with a loss to the enemy of from 7,000 to 8,000 killed. Paris was accordingly in very high spirits, and "any one daring to speak of capitulation exposed himself to be shot on the spot." It was not long, however, before they were undeceived. The Government announced that, in consequence of a want of casemates for the garrison, the work had been evacuated under the direction of General Trochu, who superintended the operation, notwithstanding the heavy fire of the enemy. It was added that the population, though grieved by the evacuation of Mont Avron, was in nowise moved by the bombardment, but was resolved to resist to the last, and to take the offensive vigorously, in order to break the investing lines. Some of the Prussian shells launched at Avron seem to have fallen in Paris itself, thus giving the citizens their first experience of the horrors of a bombardment. A correspondent of the *Cologne Gazette*, describing the condition of Mont Avron after its evacuation, said that a small church and several large houses on the summit of the Mount were much shattered by the German artillery. The whole plateau was covered with remnants of tents, destroyed furniture, ovens, hearthstones, tables, chairs, sofas, porcelain, rifles, exploded and unexploded shells, shrapnel, empty wine-bottles, toilet-glasses, fragments of iron, &c. The French seem to have lived luxuriously on the Mount, and it appeared as if they thought they should remain there for ever.

The fort was occupied by the Twelfth Saxon Corps. The siege of Paris was now officially recognised at the Prussian head-quarters as "active." Lieutenant-General von Kameke was appointed chief engineer; Major-General Prince Hohenlohe to the command of the batteries; and Colonels Rieff and Bartsch to the posts of chief assistants. Immediately after the evacuation of Mont Avron, the Germans opened fire on the batteries and forts at Bondy, Bobigny, Drancy, Neuilly, Rosny, Merlan, Noisy-le-Sec, and other positions. The French replied with more or less spirit from these points, and the intervening country, over a space of many miles, was traversed by the fiery passage of the shells. A Parisian correspondent of the *Times*, who started on the morning of December 29th, together with a friend, to watch the effect of the German bombardment, saw a good deal of what was then going on. As they passed Nogent, they found it was being heavily shelled. A deserted house, within about 150 yards of the fort, offered a good point of observation; so they went up into the top room, and thence got a view of a great part of the interior of the fort. It was at that time silent; the garrison were hidden away under shelter, and not a sign of human life was apparent. A few horses, huddled together in the inner moat to protect themselves from the extreme cold, were the only living objects that could be seen. "The shells," proceeds the correspondent, "were coming at about the rate, I calculate, of two per minute, and with a precision which struck me—this being my first experience of bombardment—as very marvellous, until a little later on, at Rosny, I saw firing far superior. Nearly all struck some portion of the fort, and yet I could not see that any damage was done. A few did not burst; others struck harmlessly mounds of earth, sometimes burying themselves in it, sometimes scattering showers of it high into the air. Many fell into the paved courtyard, and exploded with a noise and vibration which seemed to shake the house we were in from roof to base. As far as I could judge, they were of enormous size and weight, and I was considerably surprised—having very vague notions of what a bombardment ought to do—to see that they did apparently so little mischief. The deserted aspect and death-like stillness of the fort, broken only when every now and then a shell burst like a thunder-clap in the middle of it, had a most singular effect. I looked in vain for the breached walls, crumbling ramparts, or dismounted guns, which I had always imagined to be among the effects of bombarding so vigorous as I was then watching. 'You may go on in that way for two years,' said one of a few Mobiles who shared our observatory. It seemed to me they might 'go on in that way' for twenty years." Some time afterwards a shell very nearly struck the house where the correspondent and his friend were watching the fire, and they thought it prudent to withdraw to safer quarters. Some boys were looking on at the bombardment, and when a shell burst within reach they picked up the pieces, and sold them for small sums of money. There was no little danger in this proceeding, for shells, lighting on hard ground, burst into fragments which fill the air. "And such fragments!" exclaims the correspondent. "Massy lumps of iron, as big, perhaps, as a man's hand, knotted and twisted by the force of the explosion into all sorts of fantastic shapes—sometimes with protruding ragged spikes curved in like the angry claws of a wild beast." The writer and his friend



DESTRUCTION OF PETROLEUM CASKS.

were still ignorant of the fate of Avron, and, continuing their journey, reached the fort of Rosny. This was being bombarded far more vigorously than Nogent, and the precision of the German fire was extraordinary. The garrison were replying, though feebly. The fort and the earthworks about it were repeatedly struck, yet no one seemed to be wounded. Nothing could exceed the frightful character of the noise made by these projectiles. ducking their heads, and looking round for shelter from shells which fell two or three hundred yards off. The ground they were on was covered with fragments of shells, and a red patch in the snow showed where a horse had been killed and two men wounded." Some of the retreating French troops passed by on their way to Vincennes, and they looked angry. Remarks of a nature very uncomplimentary to Generals Trochu and Ducrot



SOUP DISTRIBUTION IN THE SUBURBS OF PARIS.

"Long before one could see the shell," wrote this observer, "one heard the whizzing, hurtling sound it made through the air, something like the close rush of an express train by night, approaching at the rate of a hundred miles an hour; and it seemed impossible to make out whether it was going to light upon one's head, until one had the satisfaction of seeing it burst far away. A long train of ambulance carriages had come out to Rosny, on the chance of there being work to do. Occasional groups of country people from the neighbouring villages formed a tolerably large crowd of spectators; and it was comical enough to see them were heard, and one of the civilians, sarcastically adopting a favourite expression in the official reports of French disasters, remarked that the soldiers were retiring in good order; at which, though the joke was at their own expense, the bystanders laughed heartily.

The plateau of Avron, of which the Germans now again acquired possession, is a broad piece of land, lying in front of the fort, on the side of the Marne nearest to Paris. The French seized it on the 30th of November, and proceeded to occupy it in force almost as far as Ville Evrard and Maison Blanche. There they remained until the

beginning of the bombardment—that is to say, for nearly a month; and it is probable that the opening of the German fire was hastened by the desirability of driving the enemy out of this important position. Its retention by the French troops "bulged out"—to adopt an expressive phrase used at the time—the German line of investment on the eastern side of the capital, and gave the besieged a point of vantage for the prosecution of further operations. The tremendous fire of Fort Avron so protected the French soldiers occupying the plateau in advance of it, that the Saxons had very little hope of expelling them in a hand-to-hand combat, and were therefore obliged to resort to their batteries, with a view to overcoming the fire of Avron by one still more powerful. In this, as we have seen, they were successful, and the French line receded before the superior artillery, or the better practice, of the besiegers. Another circumstance which hastened the German movement was the appearance in the Paris *Official Journal* of December 25th of an article announcing that every preparation had been made to admit of the besieged besieging the investing army. This engineering war, waged with spades and pickaxes, would soon (it was added) bear fruit, and the plateau of Avron, beneath the detached forts of Rosny and Noisy, was destined, with its battery, to become very shortly highly destructive to the besieging lines to the east of the capital. Fort Avron was created by the French in a few weeks, and had no existence until about the period of the November and December sorties. It was constructed on the eastern slope of Mont Avron, an eminence lying in front of Fort Rosny, and looking towards the Saxon position at Chelles. For some time the German engineers and artillerists had strangely neglected this important work; and the *Daily News* correspondent with the Crown Prince of Saxony wrote on the 20th of December:—"I get angry as I look at the battery, made right in our faces, but the other day comparatively harmless, and at whose door, young as it is, lie the deaths of so many stalwart Saxons, whose corpses will fertilise next year's crops in the fatal horseshoe. I get angry and impatient when I think that this place, which our ground dominates so that not a gun could ever have been mounted but for unaccountable *laissez faire*, should test the 'elasticity' of our forepost line in a direction that I am disgusted and savage to have the knowledge of." It was time, therefore, for the Germans to assume the offensive, from which they had refrained so long.

During the bombardment of Rosny, 155 shells fell into a single barrack within five hours. Casemates believed to be bombproof were penetrated; and between eight in the morning and six in the evening nearly 2,000 projectiles fell into the *enceinte*, on the scarp and the counterscarp. Three or four marines were wounded, and six persons belonging to the volunteer artillery of the National Guard were struck by a shell. In Paris great agitation prevailed when the firing was heard, and the most contradictory opinions were expressed by the loungers in the faubourgs. By some it was feared that the end was approaching; while others, taking a more hopeful view, confidently asserted that the German fire would be overpowered, and that in fact the enemy was even then being driven back with enormous loss. Others again said that the bombardment was a feint to cover the Prussian retreat, or that the enemy was detaching reinforcements to the help of Prince Frederick Charles, who had been defeated by Chanzy, and that opening fire on the forts was merely a device for masking this movement.* These sanguine utterances were chiefly to be heard in the Belleville quarter and other revolutionary districts, where it was part of the popular faith that the Republic could not possibly be vanquished. In those parts of Paris, any one expressing a contrary opinion was fiercely denounced as an alarmist and a traitor, and was often subjected to great violence. Yet, although the "Reds" had this overmastering belief in the Republic, they had none at all in the existing Administration or its commanders. Trochu, Ducrot, Jules Favre, and most of the others, were openly condemned as fools, if not worse; and threats were uttered of a fresh rising, such as should sweep away the whole nest of reactionaries and incapables. Even apart from Belleville, confidence in General Trochu was every day growing less and less. The much talked-of "plan" had not proved successful, and a change of men and measures was earnestly demanded. It was urged that on several occasions Trochu missed the opportunity of acquiring important positions outside Paris, or of inflicting serious reverses on the enemy; and, although some of these accusations may have been unjust, it is very certain that his conduct of affairs was wanting in energy, and that the Germans were not repulsed. Many of the papers — especially the *Patrie* and the *Temps*—attacked the Governor vehemently, and demanded continual sorties at any cost. By some, General Vinoy—by others, General Ducrot or Admiral de la Roncière—was suggested as a likely substitute for Trochu. As a consequence of all this discussion, Rentes rapidly fell.

* "Inside Paris during the Siege," by an Oxford Graduate. London, 1871.

and the confidence in ultimate victory became less and less each day. To meet the various rumours of the time, however, the *Official Journal* of December 31st contained a proclamation (signed by Trochu alone) declaring that there had been no dissension in the councils of the Government, and that the army was preparing for action.

The railway station at Noisy-le-Sec, whence the line to Mulhouse branches towards the Marne from the Strasburg line, was destroyed by the bombardment during the final days of December. The Saxons also succeeded in dispersing the French artillery in cantonments in the village of Bondy, and in compelling the divisions in advance of the forts to retire behind them. In Paris it was stated that the French were not altogether unprepared for the attack on the eastern forts; that it had not escaped the observation of their artillerists, their engineer officers, and their extreme outposts, that the Saxons on the heights of Raincy had for some time been actively engaged in constructing batteries; and that, in consequence, General Vinoy (who was in command of that portion of the defence) considered that, whether those works were intended for offensive or defensive purposes, it was necessary to assemble an extra force in that direction. He therefore placed a considerably increased body of infantry of the Line, Mobiles, rifles, artillerymen, and Marines, on the plateau of Avron, some to the right, and some to the left, as far as the adjoining forts of Rosny and Noisy. The troops were under canvas or in the trenches. An intention seems to have existed to form a permanent camp on the spot, for some of the canvas tents were being replaced by wooden huts. "General Vinoy," says an account in the *Staats Anzeiger*, dated from Versailles on the 2nd of January, "presented himself every day to inspect the progress of the work, but suddenly gave orders on the 26th December, the day before the bombardment, for the withdrawal of the bulk of the troops from these positions, leaving only the particular battalions that had been destined for work in the trenches, who were to take up a position between Rosny and Fontenay-sous-Bois, probably with the intention of operating against Blanches and Chelles. Before these movements could be carried out, the Saxon batteries opened fire on the morning of the 27th December against Avron." Although the French troops may have been in some degree aware of the erection of batteries by the Saxons, it seems certain they did not know that the danger had progressed to anything like its real extent. The proceedings of the enemy were so well masked, that, while the French may have suspected a battery here and there, they were not prepared for the tremendous fire which suddenly burst out on them. One of the Paris newspapers remarked that "a certain amount of disorder" occurred among the French troops; "they were surprised, and lost their presence of mind." The foreposts took to flight, but the shells seemed to pursue them. The panic communicated itself to nearly the whole of the troops, including the Mobiles and Marines, and a general rush, totally devoid of order, took place. Such is the narrative given by a French newspaper, and it is not likely to be overcharged. As the soldiers were retreating, the Saxon artillery opened fire on the villages of Rosny, Fontenay, and Montreuil, and drove the French out of all those positions. When the dismayed fugitives reached the rear of Fort Rosny, they found a body of National Guards drawn up out of range of the shells. The citizen soldiery at first endeavoured to encourage their comrades with loud and patriotic cries; but this failing, they presented their muskets at the advancing line, and so put a stop to the flight.

The bombardment did not entirely absorb the attention of Parisians. Other matters pressed even closer. One of the most serious results of the prolonged investment made itself felt, as the year drew towards its close, in a scarcity of fuel, or at any rate in a difficulty in procuring it. This, with the temperature many degrees below freezing point, was a very alarming fact; and it is not surprising to find that, in the last week of December, a panic set in with respect to this matter. Neither the civil nor the military authorities had laid up any special stores of wood; and when the cold weather caused an extra demand on what was already in the shops, the supply rapidly diminished, and soon failed altogether. The case, indeed, became so desperate, that a number of poor people sallied forth with hatchets and saws on the morning of December 27th, and quickly appropriated the palings round waste grounds, the scaffoldings of abandoned houses, the trees in private gardens, and even the timber barrier running across the Avenue Uhrich, formerly the Avenue de l'Impératrice. The National Guards made a show of interfering, but it was of the feeblest kind; and at one time it seemed as if all the available timber in the city would be seized in this irregular way. The Government accordingly issued the following proclamation to the inhabitants of Paris on December 29th :—

"The extraordinary and lasting severity of this winter season has caused us great suffering for the last eight days. At the present time, the cold is our cruelest

enemy. The whole populace in this new trial shows the persistence of the public spirit, and the indefatigable efforts of that voluntary discipline which now for nearly four months has honoured the people of Paris in the eyes of France and of history. On its part, the Administration has done everything that the situation demanded—that is to say, everything possible. Since the cold has set in, the Mayors of Paris have ordered that large quantities of fuel should be cut in the woods of the city—viz., in the Bois de Boulogne and the Bois de Vincennes, which have been set apart for that purpose. The plantations which line the national and departmental roads are sacrificed without distinction. The large trees of our boulevards have also been cut and sold. This work has placed at our disposal immense stores, and is being accomplished with all the celerity consistent with so great a work, and with the necessary transport. At the same time, all the timber-yards where the wood was prepared for use have been placed at our disposal, and, despite the enormous expense, we do not hesitate to deliver for consumption sawn planks usually reserved for building purposes.

"The Mayors of Paris are receiving assistance from all parts. All the syndicates, all the administrations, and the corporation, are supporting us with a most praiseworthy zeal—an assistance as precious as it is disinterested. Each has done his duty, and, thanks to their united efforts, we shall thus come to the end of this terrible winter.

"But the populace, on their part, must come to our aid. They must supply by their good will, by their honesty, and by their voluntary assistance, those measures for the preservation of order which are lacking. If the timber-yards where the wood for distribution by the municipality is stored are, as has been the case, broken into and pillaged—if our coppices at Vincennes and Boulogne are nightly robbed by bands of marauders whom it would be impossible to seize without the assistance of the National Guard and of honest men—if public and private property are not respected—it is not possible either to supply provisions, or to apportion them equally. We denounce these marauders and pillagers to the National Guard and the population. They are the accomplices of the enemy, and the Administration is resolved to punish them with the greatest energy."

The mere issue of this proclamation would probably have had no great effect on the marauders; but the subsequent arrival of wood from the outlying forests removed for a time the necessity which had prompted the depredations. With better arrangements it would never have existed.

The blundering of the Republican Government was of course eagerly seized upon by the advocates of the Empire, as showing that the revolutionary party had conferred no services on the country by its *coup d'état* of September 4th. The Buonapartist journal, the *Drapeau*, published in Brussels, had an article in its Number for December 29th, arguing that all the effective part of the national resistance was due to the late Government. There was not a single general, said this advocate, who did not owe his elevation to the Emperor, nor a single success which was not the work of the men of the Empire. On the other hand, none of the revolutionary measures had succeeded, and all that belonged to the Republican system had failed. The revolution had created, to the profit of King William, a diversion which favoured his interests better than the greatest victories of his armies. It destroyed in a day the administrative organisation of France, its national representation, its financial credit, and its diplomatic action. The greatest thing which had been accomplished since then was the defence of the capital. "But," asked the *Drapeau*, "who had prepared that defence? Who had proceeded to the arming of the forts, the concentration of troops, ammunition, and provisions? Who had called to Paris the marine infantry? Who had found means of providing for several months for the subsistence of 2,000,000 souls? The revolution broke out on the 4th of September; the investment of Paris occurred on the 18th. Who will believe that fourteen days sufficed to the Republic to put the capital in a state of defence, if the organisation had not been prepared by the Empire?" The military chiefs at the head of the Army of Paris were connected with the Imperial rule. It was false to say that General Trochu had been in disgrace under the Empire. On the contrary, he had been advanced with exceptional rapidity, having been made a colonel in 1855, and a general of division in 1859—one of the youngest in the army. The Emperor had called him to the most honourable functions, and no one had imposed that choice on his Majesty. But Trochu had never been a public favourite, and many Parisians did not even know his name. When appointed Governor of Paris by the Emperor, at Châlons, on the 17th of August, the general—speaking as a Breton, a Christian, and a soldier—had given his Majesty the most emphatic assurances of devotion. (This account, by the way, corresponds with that which General Trochu himself afterwards gave to the National Assembly, when he related that on the occasion in question he said to the Emperor, "Sire,—In the situation, so full of peril, in which the country finds itself, a revolution would hurl it into the abyss. All that can be done to avoid a revolution I will do.") Trochu, therefore, pursued the *Drapeau*, could not be set to the credit of the Republic; if the Emperor had not named him Governor of Paris, he would never have occupied

the position he was then filling. General Ducrot also had been honoured by the Emperor with marks of special favour. He was one of the officers best known and best appreciated by the Emperor; so was General Vinoy, who had for several years sat in the Senate. General Renault, who had had a limb amputated after the last sortie, was likewise a senator, and had always passed for a man deeply devoted to the Empire. Vice-Admiral de la Roncière (in command of the forts) had been Prince Napoleon's aide-de-camp; the Countess, his wife, was lady of honour to the Princess Clothilde; while General Schmitz (chief of General Trochu's Staff) was orderly to the Emperor, and was charged by him with the duty of conveying to the Empress the Austrian colours captured at Solferino. "The officers now taking part in the national defence," continued the *Drapeau*, "are serving France, but not the Republic. As remarked by the signers of the protests in the *Indépendance Belge*, 'they are not affected by party influences; they belong only to France, and France alone will dispose of them; they will never think of establishing a Government which should not have the assent of the country.' Are they Republicans, these generals who, like Bourbaki and d'Aurelles de Paladines, do not even utter in their proclamations the name of a Republic? Are they Republicans, the Pontifical Zouaves who are distinguishing themselves on the banks of the Loire? Is it for the Republic or for France that these Imperialists, Legitimists, and Orleanists, whose courage is admired even by the Prussian army, face death? It would be extremely unjust to accord a monopoly of such heroism to a party, a minority, a faction. To sum up: It is the Empire which founded the Mobiles, created marching regiments, called the marine infantry to the defence of the territory, insured pecuniary resources by the success of the loan, and prepared the defence of Paris. Everybody remembers what Count Palikao had done for the organisation of our armies during his too short administration. Let us admit, however, to be just, that certain things ought to be credited to the Republic—revolutionary innovations, journalists made generals of division, a lawyer installed as Minister of War, the Staff of the universal Republic under Garibaldi's orders, the arrest of generals, the despatch of civilian commissioners to the armies, local leagues in the north, anarchical movements at Lyons, Marseilles, and Toulouse, demagogic phraseology, accusations of treason, distrust, and suspicion of most honourable men. All this, we admit, is the work of Republicans, and bears, as it were, their mark and seal." In conclusion, the Imperialist writer expressed his belief that, if successes should be obtained, they would be seen to have happened, not on account of the Republic, but in spite of it.

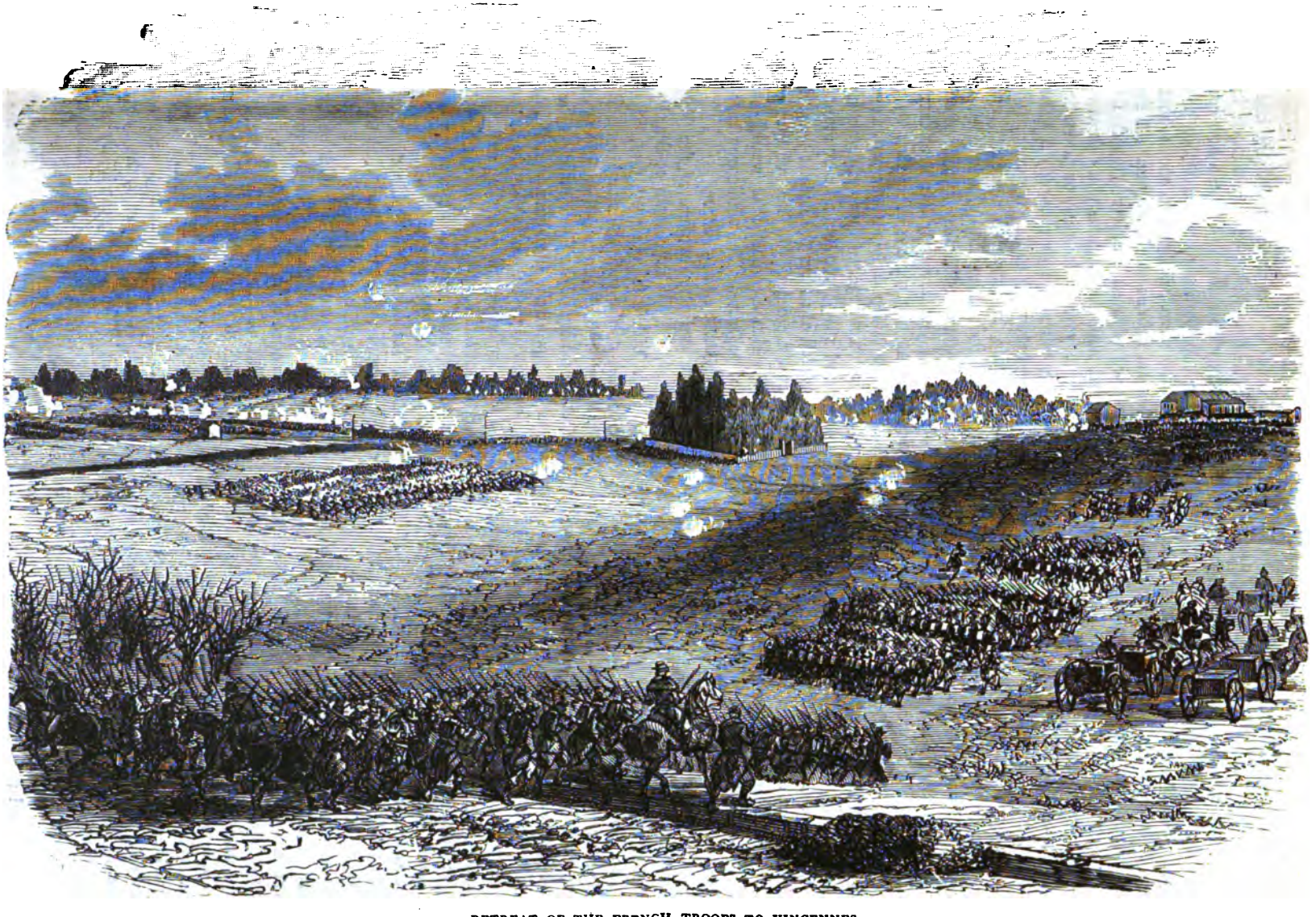
There can be no doubt that the argument of the *Drapeau* was in some respects just and to the point, though of course it was highly coloured, to suit the particular cause which the writer was advocating. For nearly twenty years the Republicans had been criticising the faults and failings of the Empire with a venom which only the most deadly antagonism could generate, and had at the same time been suggesting that nothing could redeem France but the political religion of the Republic. The position was now reversed. The Republicans were in power, and had become the objects, instead of the mouthpieces, of relentless comment. It was not to be expected that the Imperialists, after being judged with so much bitterness for a long period of time—after being baited like a chained bear at every conceivable point—would refrain from retaliation when the difficult task of government had passed into the hands of their opponents. Every Administration has its weak side, and commits errors which it is more easy to detect than to avoid; and this, of course, is especially the case under such exceptional circumstances as those of France at the close of 1870. The Buonapartists, therefore, were at no loss to retort upon their enemies the charges of incapacity and selfishness which had been so frequently brought against themselves. The Republic had not expelled the foreigner, and by this time was obviously very unlikely to do so. It had lost fortress after fortress, and battle after battle; it had indirectly stimulated disorder and anarchy, which it now feebly endeavoured to check; and it was presumably substituting the whims of a minority for the authentic will of the nation, as regarded the form of its government. These were arguments of terrible force, which no amount of sophistry could overcome. But, as in all partisan disputes, there was a great deal of unfair omission of matters which ought in justice to have been placed to the credit of the other side. The Republic had certainly exhibited considerable energy in creating new armies after the appalling disasters of Sedan and Metz; and, civilian though he was, M. Gambetta had proved that he possessed the right qualities for a War Minister during a time of invasion, and had struck an electric thrill of enthusiasm throughout the country, which had evoked the utmost display of force of which the nation was then capable. To the statement that the preparation of Paris for resisting a siege was due to the Empire, may be opposed the asseveration of M. Gambetta, in his Tours proclamation of October

9th, that the Revolution found Paris without cannon and without arms. The truth probably lies somewhere between the two assertions; for here is good reason to believe that on the 4th of September Paris was not fully prepared for attack, while, on the other hand, it is not likely that the Republicans did as much as they claim credit for. The fact of the chief generals of the army being still those of Imperial appointing was undoubtedly very singular and noteworthy; but when we find that these generals never made the slightest attempt to restore the Empire, it is impossible not to see how greatly the Buonapartists had lost in popularity. A manifesto had but recently been signed by several of the French military prisoners in Belgium, protesting against the Imperialist propaganda which had been circulated amongst them. The faith of the army in its old idols had been rudely shaken.



AT CLOSE QUARTERS.

In this confusion of the public mind as to the rival claims of different parties, it is not surprising that some Frenchmen looked towards the invader himself as a protection against the anarchy which threatened the land. Such was actually the case, and it was one of the most humiliating proofs of the degradation to which the country had been re-



RETREAT OF THE FRENCH TROOPS TO VINCENNES.

duced. It was feared that the conclusion of peace —however desirable on other accounts—would lead to outbreaks of revolutionary passion; and subsequent events proved that the apprehension was only too well founded. Herr Wickede, of the *Cologne Gazette*, related that several Frenchmen longed for the speedy entry of the German troops into Paris, being convinced that peace would not be possible until then. "Until that happens," said a pensioned Staff officer at Nancy to the German correspondent, "the present Provisional Government at Bordeaux will not be put down, and the peace which is necessary at any price for my poor country, if it is not to be entirely destroyed, will never be restored." It was calculated by Herr Wickede that, before the war came to an end, at least a million Frenchmen would have borne arms for a longer or shorter period, and that half that number would be killed, crippled, or made sickly for life. Napoleon I., in all his campaigns, he added, did not lead many more young men out of France to the slaughter. This appears to be an exaggeration; but the evil was unquestionably one of fearful magnitude. In the course of the half year from July to December, very large numbers of persons had died of distress, anxiety, sorrow, and the epidemics that are born of war. Famine likewise prevailed in the districts that had been desolated by the German troops. "And all this happens," said Herr Wickede, by way of moralising on the facts, "because the French think it contrary to their nationality or pride, whichever it is called, to cede a small bit of territory—Alsace and the small part of Lorraine where German speech and manners especially prevail, with hardly 1,500,000 inhabitants; districts which were mostly stolen from us by Louis XIV." The French may be excused for taking a different view of the matter. If it was worth the while of the Germans to fight for this territory, it was equally worth the while of the French. Its value was certainly as great to the latter as to the former; nay, it was even greater, because, in addition to the intrinsic importance of the provinces, and of the fortresses they contained, the question of national dignity involved in the loss of a part of the national possessions was a very serious element in the general situation. The Germans themselves were constantly announcing that Alsace and a portion of Lorraine were necessary to them, in order that they might be in a position of unquestionable predominance over France; and, considering how completely they had subjected that country, even without the eastern provinces, it is not wonderful that Frenchmen should have tried the utmost to save themselves from being placed at a still greater disadvantage, to say nothing of their being bound in honour to stand to the last by populations which were thoroughly French in feeling, and strongly disinclined to form a new connection. It takes two parties to make either a war or a peace; and there was just as much obstinacy on the German side as on the French. A Frenchman might have retorted on Herr Wickede: "All this bloodshed happens because you Germans think it necessary to your nationality, or pride, or position in Europe, to acquire permanently a certain piece of territory belonging to us. We were ready months ago to disarm, to dismantle fortresses, and to pay you a large indemnity; but you insisted on having our land and a considerable number of our faithful citizens. If you say they are necessary to your protection against us, we reply that by the same rule they are indispensable to *our* protection against *you*. You threatened us in 1791; you invaded us in 1814 and 1815; you are now overrunning us in 1870. Which of us has the greater need of protection against the other?" The question of morals was one which the Prussians would have done wisely not to raise. The whole war had resolved itself into a mere affair of force.

The extraordinary inaction of the French fleet led to some official statements at the close of the year, from which it appeared that, at the commencement of the war, the naval authorities were unprovided with charts, and therefore unable, after the extinguishing of the lighthouses on the Prussian coast, to approach the land. Admiral Bouet-Willaumez, moreover, received none but vague and contradictory orders from home; and the Danish Government was afraid of allying itself with France. The admiral summoned a commission, which drew up a report on the possibility of naval operations against the most important points on the Prussian coasts. From this it appeared that the positions most capable of being attacked were Colberg and Dantzic, but that the results would be so small as to destroy the reputation belonging to the French fleet on account of its great strength. In order to operate with effect, special ships were required, together with the co-operation of a landing corps. The "reputation" of the French fleet seems to have been of small worth if it was unable to do anything to prove its strength. Mismanagement was in truth as rife in the French fleet as in the French army; and a mode of inflicting great injury on the Prussians, and of effecting an important diversion, was thrown away. The fleet returned to France, and the sailors were sent to man the forts, or to hurl themselves against the solid ranks of the Germans in the fury of desperate sorties.

CHAPTER IX.

Further Operations of General Manteuffel—Slight Engagements—Operations of General Peltingeas—Proclamation to the People of Arras—Storming of the Fortified Castle of Robert le Diable—Position of Faidherbe between Arras and Douai—Engagement at Bapaume on December 31st—Indecisive Result—The Battle resumed on January 2nd, 1871—Renewed Fighting on the 3rd—Sanguinary Encounters—Contradictory Claims to Victory—German and French Reports—Subsequent Proceedings of Faidherbe—Capitulation of Péronne—New Year's Reception and Speeches of the King of Prussia—"William the Victorious"—Speech of M. Gambetta at Bordeaux—The Republic and the Empire—Proclamation of King William to the German People on the Re-establishment of the Imperial Dignity—Installation of the King, as Emperor of Germany, at Versailles (January 18th)—Letters to the German Powers—Addresses of the Prussian Diet—Under-current of Discontent—Want of a Common Capital for Germany—The Future Policy of the New Empire—Germany and Prussia in the Past—Promises and Fears—German Trials—Frightful Condition of French Prisoners.

GENERAL MANTEUFFEL lost no time in following up his successes in the North. The French having, on the 25th of December, retired from their positions near Querrieux and Pont Noyelles, as already related, the Prussians continued their northward march, and captured some of the enemy's troops at Albert on the 27th. Von Göben—who, it will be remembered, had charge of the particular division of Manteuffel's army which was sent against Faidherbe—pursued the retreating French with one portion of his force (strengthened by the cavalry of Prince Albrecht's son), while he despatched another portion to invest Péronne, and to keep up his communications. Several small engagements—sometimes resulting favourably to one side, sometimes to the other—occurred in the northern provinces of France during the last few days of December; but, for the most part, they were not of sufficient importance to warrant any detailed description. The Prussians were manœuvring over a large extent of country, with a view to checking the French attempt to move southward to the relief of Paris; the French were doing their best to realise that design, to preserve their remaining strongholds in the north, and to cut off the retreat of the enemy. Both the French and Prussian armies were a good deal scattered; and hence ensued a number of comparatively insignificant skirmishes, which left the position nearly the same as before. General Peltingeas arrived at Havre on the 29th of December, to take the command of the troops there; and on landing from the Honfleur boat he made what is described as a patriotic and Republican speech to the populace. He said he had resolved to defend the place, and he uttered the customary boast that he would only leave it dead or victorious, certain as he was that he would be well seconded by the brave people of Havre. On the following morning he issued two proclamations, conceived in the same sense—the first addressed to the people of the town, the second to the army. He then left for Bolbec, to review the troops under his orders, and to commence active operations against the enemy. In other quarters, preparation was made for receiving the Prussians, and the Prefect of the Pas-de-Calais issued the following proclamation to the people of Arras:—

"The enemy is close upon us. Perhaps the town will be invested and attacked. I know that you regard this possibility with that firmness and courage which distinguish the populations of the north of France, and that you have decided to defend yourselves to the last extremity. Still, there are some wretches who, from cowardice or other sentiments, are the accomplices of our enemies. I believed that the energetic language of General de Chaigère and the municipal committee had put an end to their schemes, but I was deceived. For some days they have been spreading a rumour that the town will not be defended, but will be surrendered at the first summons, and they seek to instil that conviction into the National Guard of the army. These wretches must know that they render themselves guilty not only of spreading an unworthy calumny in reference to the authorities charged with the national defence, but also of a crime which the law punishes with death. I call upon all good citizens, all the agents of the public force, to acquaint me with the names of those citizens who continue these unworthy manœuvres, and I guarantee that exemplary justice shall be done."

It was not merely "these wretches" that the country had to dread. It was equally in danger from well-meaning but inefficient regiments of Mobile Guards, such as those then being drilled at Boulogne, who treated their officers with impudent familiarity, and for whose encouragement M. Gambetta issued a placard, assuring them that the Prussian arms were not to be feared; that the wound of a Prussian triangular bayonet was only as the prick of a pin; and that, the Prussians being in compact masses, it was an easy matter to drive a bayonet into some one.

Serious fighting took place in the neighbourhood of Rouen about the turn of the year.

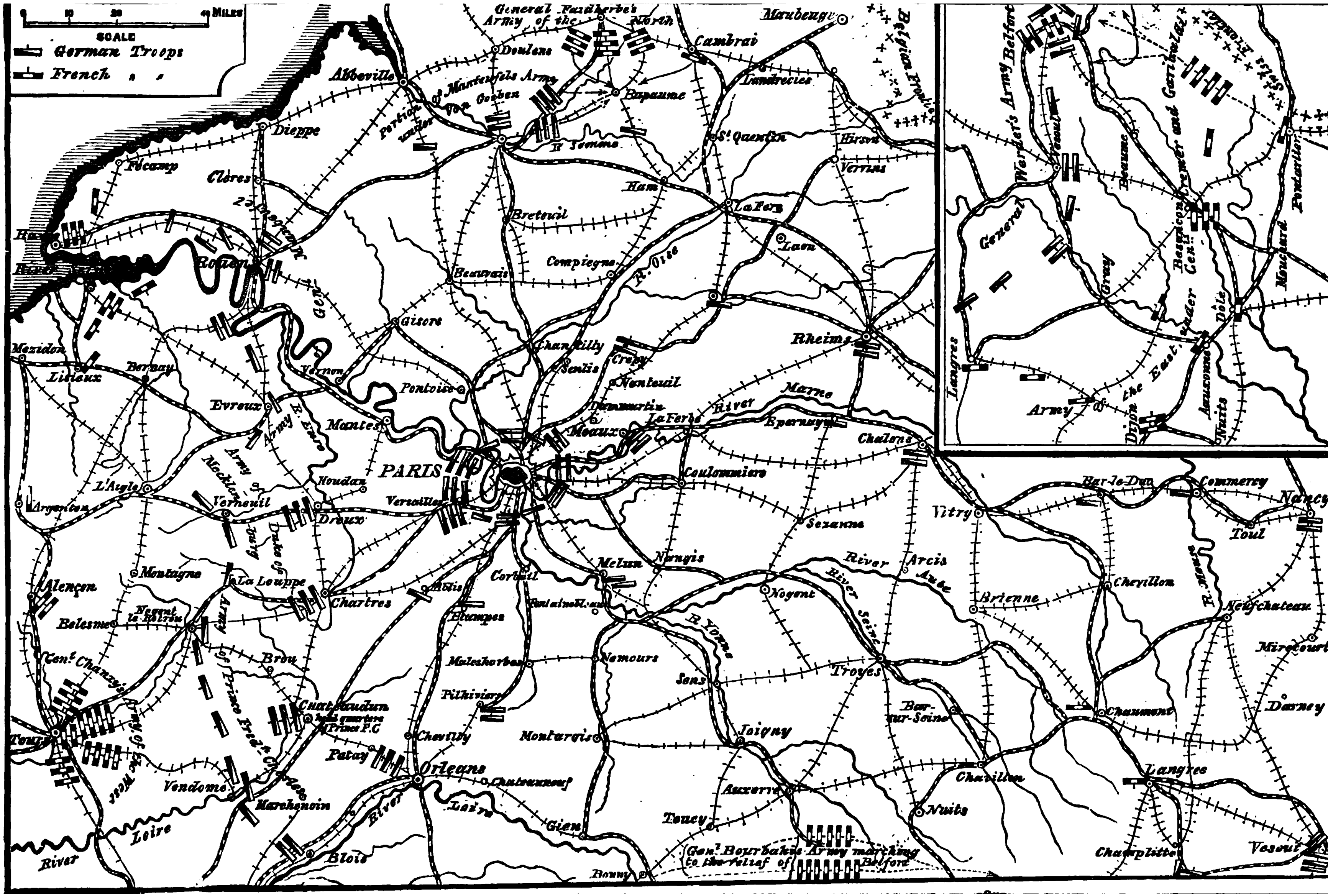
A French corps advanced on the 30th of December to La Bouille, twelve miles south-west of Rouen, on the left or southern bank of the Seine, and captured the Prussian position there. The next day the Prussians momentarily re-took the place, but, according to the French, were afterwards repulsed with heavy loss. According to the German account, five battalions of the first division of General Manteuffel's army marched from Rouen on the 31st against a brigade which had advanced from the vicinity of Briare to Moulineaux, westward of Grand Couronne. The German commander's report said that the French brigade was partly routed, partly driven into the fortified castle of Robert le Diable, which was afterwards carried by storm. Several of the French were killed, and 100 taken prisoners; among the latter was the commander of the Francs-tireurs in those parts. It is evident from the subsequent course of events, that this statement must have been greatly exaggerated, and that the French account was substantially correct; for we find the Prussians sending out a new expedition against the same place on the night of the 3rd of January. On the early morning of the following day, the troops of General Bentheim, which had been despatched from Rouen for that purpose, surrounded the castle of Robert le Diable, and captured the greater number of the French there. Some battalions of Mobiles, who marched to the support of their comrades, were speedily driven back, and about 200 of them were made prisoners in an ancient and picturesque church near the scene of conflict. The rest retreated along the road to Bourgtheroulde. It is said that the Prussian band mockingly played some tunes from the opera of "Robert le Diable," in sarcastic allusion to the position of the French in Normandy, and that this was purposely done in the hearing of the unfortunate prisoners. The French were afterwards pursued in the direction of Elbœuf, Bourgtheroulde, and Brionne; and the forces designed for the defence of the north-western part of France were completely scattered a few days later: they numbered upwards of 20,000, and were under the command of General Roy. Much was hoped from this officer; but he seems to have been baffled by the inefficiency of his raw Mobiles. The troops in the castle of Robert le Diable were surprised in the accustomed fashion, some being asleep, and some gathered about a fire, without the least knowledge that the enemy was at hand. The position at La Bouille was a very important one, for as long as the French held it they cut off the communications of the Prussians with Duclair on the Seine, and with Elbœuf, Evreux, and Bernay by land. The place should therefore have been more vigorously defended; but, like other strategical points which the French acquired during the war, it was feebly held, and the Prussians quickly recovered what they had lost.

Faidherbe was in sufficient strength to give the Germans no small trouble or slight uneasiness. On leaving the neighbourhood of Querrieux, he retired into a triangular-shaped territory, the corners of which were represented by Arras to the west, Cambray to the east, and Lille to the north—towns which offered him some protection against attack. Arras, however, which was for a short time occupied by Faidherbe, was soon left to defend itself by its own forces. The precise position of the retreating army was between Arras and Douai. Here the men entrenched themselves; but it was not long before the Germans made a reconnaissance of the position, their scouts even venturing up to the very ramparts. The country round Arras, however, was sufficiently free from the enemy to permit of a French division making a demonstration about that town on the 30th of December; and on the 31st it proceeded to advance, with its left wing resting on La Scarpe, and its right on the heights of Beaumont-les-Loges. The front (according to a French account) extended for about a league, slightly convex in shape, before Arras. General Faidherbe then advanced in person towards Achiet-le-Grand, with the intention of manœuvring his army in case of a general attack by the Prussians, and also with the hope of relieving Péronne, the investment of which had not been prevented by some rather desultory fighting that had taken place before its walls. The Prussian centre was at Bapaume, and one portion of the army was in front of that town, towards Ervillers, Béhagnies, and Sapignies. Bapaume, which is twelve miles south of Arras, had been reached by the Germans on the 26th, so that they had accomplished, in two days, a march of about thirty miles through the snow. While lying in their new positions, they were attacked on the 31st of December by a division of the French Twenty-third Corps, under the command of Captain Payen, of the navy. The fighting went on from eleven A.M. to four P.M., although it is said that the French artillery was far inferior, in point of numbers, to the Prussian. Faidherbe, it appears, calculated on assistance reaching him from General Robin; but, for some unexplained reason, the reinforcements failed to arrive. The French, however, continued to resist as long as possible, and the numbers of killed and wounded were considerable, especially among the naval fusiliers. The

result, according to the French accounts, was that the troops passed the night in their respective positions; and it seems probable that nothing decisive was effected by either belligerent.

The first day of the new year was passed in quiet, and General Faidherbe issued from his head-quarters at Boileux an order of the day, which said:—"To-morrow we face the enemy, who occupies the mountains and woody country of Adinfer, Hannescamps, Ayette, Bcry, and other places. The villages in these districts are doubtless bereft of provisions; the troops will therefore receive three days' rations this afternoon. Colonels will inform their men that during three days all they will have to eat will be what they carry with them. The convoys will be able to reach Rivière, and the railway will run to Boileux." On the 2nd of January, 1871, the fighting was resumed. According to the official report of General Manteuffel, the French took the offensive with large masses of men. A prolonged and sanguinary engagement followed, and at the close of the day both sides claimed partial advantages; but the event was again undecided. The battle was continued on the 3rd, when the Germans, having received reinforcements, confronted their adversaries with about 16,000 men. The 65th Regiment was ordered to hold Bapaume, which commands the high road from Arras to Péronne; and the rest of the army, at six o'clock in the morning, moved towards Sapignies and Favreuil, where the right wing of the French was posted. After marching for an hour, the Prussians fell in with their adversaries, and a hot artillery engagement was soon raging along the line. The French artillery was spoken of as very good, and was said to have greatly exceeded in excellence that which the Empire had brought into the field in the earlier days of the war. The guns were not only good in themselves, but well-served, and they did great execution among the artillerymen of the Prussians. The infantry, also, behaved very well, and frequently charged their opponents with spirit and resolution. In storming a village held by the 33rd Regiment of the Prussians, the French carried the place at the point of the bayonet, and killed about a hundred men of one battalion, including all its officers. The *Daily News* correspondent relates:—"I saw a colonel, commander of a cavalry regiment, stumble with his horse, and break his left thigh-bone. Some of his soldiers came to assist him; and while requesting them not to carry him away, but to allow him to look on at the combat, he was shot in the left arm. 'Now, boys,' he said, 'it is getting warm here; take me away.' He was taken, and scarcely carried away fifty yards when he got another shot in the chest, and was killed instantaneously." The French also suffered terribly. During one of their charges, a battalion had to pass a body of Prussians hidden at about five yards' distance. Suddenly a tremendous volley was opened on the advancing Frenchmen, and nearly the whole battalion was immediately stretched on the earth, while the few who remained untouched took to flight. Throughout the whole day this fearful carnage went on. The French succeeded in taking Sapignies, and their line then extended from that point down to Ligny, Tilloy, and Harlencourt, to the south of Bapaume. As evening came on, they had their outposts in some of the streets of Bapaume itself, close to the Prussian outposts. "The 65th (Prussian) Regiment," says the *Daily News* correspondent, "now began to prepare for a fight in the streets, to build barricades at every entrance of the town, and to turn every window into a loophole. The aspect of the town was terrible indeed; the inhabitants, full of fear, fled into the cellars, and even the soldiers looked earnest and gloomy, for the French army was twice, if not three times, as numerous as that of the Prussians, numbering 45,000 men, with forty heavy guns of the Marine. During several hours, General von Kummer was seen between the lines of the advancing posts, exposing himself to the French fire, and one of his adjutants was wounded." Towards midnight, however, the French withdrew from Bapaume, and (if we may rely on German accounts) it became apparent that they were retreating along the whole line. It is said that, some time before dark, the first battalion of the 65th Prussian Regiment had carried the villages of Ligny, Tilloy, and Harlencourt, thus driving back the French from the positions they had occupied in the earlier part of the day. General Faidherbe likewise found that his losses were much greater than he had supposed. The Prussian losses, however, were also very serious, and, the ambulance of Bapaume being crowded in the course of a few hours, a hospital was established in the old barracks, to which several French as well as Germans were taken.

As usual, the official accounts of the two belligerents were very contradictory. The French report was to the effect that the engagement on the 2nd of January lasted during five hours, and that in the end the French "maintained their positions." On the 3rd, it was added, the fighting was much more severe, lasting from eight in the morning till six in the evening, and, said General Faidherbe in his despatch, "we drove the Prussians from all their positions and all the villages." The army, said another telegram, "stopped before Bapaume,



SCALE
MILES
German Troops
French
General Faidherbe's Army of the North
Portion of Manteufel's Army under Von Goeben
Belgian Frontier
Abbeville
Dieppe
Fécamp
Clères
Rouen
Bapaume
Cambrai
Doulens
Landrecies
Maubeuge
St Quentin
Hirson
Vervins
Ham
La Fère
Laon
Breteuil
Beauvais
Compiègne
R. Oise
Gisors
Chantilly
Senlis
Crepy
Nanteuil
Rheims
Mezidon
Lisieux
Bernay
Evreux
Vernon
Pontoise
Mantes
R. Eure
PARIS
Meaux
La Ferté
River Marne
Epernay
Chalons
Coulommiers
L'Aigle
Argenton
Verneuil
Houdan
Dreux
Versailles
Army of Mecklenburg
Duke of Mecklenburg
Montagne
La Louppe
Chartres
Corbeil
Melun
Nangis
Sezanne
Vitry
Alençon
Belesme
Nogent le Rotrou
Etampes
Malesherbes
Nemours
Sens
R. Yonne
Nogent
River Seine
Troyes
River Aube
Arcis
Brienne
Cheyllon
Bar-le-Duc
Commercy
Nancy
Toul
R. Meuse
Neufchateau
Mirecourt
Darney
Chaumont
Langres
Champlitte
Vesoul
Genl. Chanzy's Army of the West
Army of Prince Fredk. Charles
Brou
Chateaudun
Pithiviers
Chevilly
Montargis
Joigny
Bar-sur-Seine
Chatillon
Nuits
Auxerre
Toucy
Patay
Orleans
Chateauneuf
River Loire
Gien
Vendome
Marchenoir
Blois
Tours
Bonny
Genl. Bourbaki's Army marching to the relief of Belfort
Werder's Army
Belfort
Vesoul
Beaune
Besançon
Cremer and Garibaldi
Swiss Frontier
Pontarlier
Mouchard
General
Gray
Dole
Auxonne
Nuits
Langres
Army of the East under Genl.
Dijon



which might easily have been taken had not General Faidherbe recoiled from the extremity of bombarding and firing the town. More than 3,000 Prussians were placed *hors de combat*. The French artillery was better served and superior in fire and precision to the Prussian." The German account was given in telegrams from Versailles, d January 5, which said:—"On the 3rd, collected 15th Division, and a detachment u Prince Albrecht the younger, maintained a hours' fight with two hostile Army Corps. troops at evening took two villages with the bayo

and again made several hundreds of prisoners. The enemy, after sustaining unusually heavy losses, retreated during the night towards Arras and Douai. In this retreat our pursuing cavalry successfully attacked hostile battalions, and made additional prisoners." A good deal of controversy on the facts of the case went on for some days between the French and German commanders. On the one hand, General Manteuffel asserted that General Göben had dispersed Faidherbe's army, and that the 8th Cuirassiers had charged and broken up two regiments. The *New Prussian (Cross) Gazette* said that on the 2nd the Germans repulsed all attacks until the evening set in, and that on the 3rd they triumphantly maintained their positions during a nine hours' engagement against the whole of the French Northern Army, which suffered extraordinary losses, and was compelled to retire during the night towards the north. On the other hand, the French official accounts maintained that the Germans were completely beaten and driven back, some of the villages they had occupied being carried at the point of the bayonet. The village of Béhagnies, it was alleged, was entirely burnt, and Bapaume, sharing the same fate, was rendered untenable by the enemy. The Prussians, it was admitted, took a battery, but the French affirmed that they re-captured it. General Faidherbe, on the 4th of January, addressed to the Prefect of Arras a statement of the course of events, which ran as follows :—

"On the 1st of January, the Army of the North marched out of its lines of La Scarpe, where the Prussian army did not dare to attack it, and cantoned before Arras. On the 2nd it moved towards the cantonments of the enemy around Bapaume. The 2nd Brigade of the 1st Division of the Twenty-second Corps took the villages of Achiet-le-Grand and Biencourt. The 1st Division of the Twenty-third Corps, notwithstanding prodigies of valour, failed in its attack on the village of Béhagnies ; but the Prussians, seeing themselves turned by the occupation of the village of Achiet-le-Grand, evacuated Béhagnies during the night. At daybreak on the 3rd, the battle commenced on the whole line. The 1st Division of the Twenty-third Corps took the villages of Sapignies and Favreuil, supported on the left by the division of Mobilised Guards. The 2nd Division of the Twenty-second Corps entered, after severe fighting, the village of Bievillers, which had become the centre of the battle, and took the Prussian positions in the rear, which were very vigorously defended, as well as the village of Avesnes-les-Bapaume. The 1st Division of the Twenty-second Corps captured at the same time Grevillers and Ligny-Tilloy. At six P.M. we had driven the Prussians from the whole battle-field, which was covered with their dead.

"A great number of wounded Prussians remained in our hands in the villages where fighting had been going on ; also a large number of prisoners. Some pelotons, carried away by their ardour, were engaged without orders in the suburbs of the town of Bapaume, the Prussians having intrenched themselves in some of the houses. As it did not enter into my views to take this town at the risk of destroying it, these pelotons were recalled at nightfall. The losses of the Prussians during these two days are very considerable ; ours too are serious. The Army of the North has taken its cantonments to between Adinfer and Boyelles, the villages in advance of them having been completely destroyed."

A telegraphic report from General Manteuffel referred to the battle of Bapaume as the engagement in which General Faidherbe spoke of having driven his opponents from all their positions, "whilst in fact he is rapidly retreating, and being closely pursued." To this, Faidherbe replied in a communication dated January 7th, and addressed to the Commissary-General of the Department of the North, in which he said :—

"I had hoped that the Prussians would not venture to deny our victory at Bapaume ; but I see by their bulletins that we have a second time been annihilated by the army of General von Manteuffel, commanded by Prince Albrecht's son (*sic*).

"I maintain in its entirety the accuracy of the account of this battle given by me on the 4th inst., and I now confine myself to pointing out the chief material inaccuracies of the Prussian despatches. They assert that the Army of the North beat a retreat during the night. The fact is, the Army of the North passed the night in the villages of Grevillers, Bievillers, Favreuil, Sapignies, Béhagnies, and Achiet, which it had conquered from the Prussians ; and it did not take to its encampments, where we are still, until the following morning, the enemy in the meantime giving no signs of life. As regards the pursuit by the enemy's cavalry, the only incident to report is that at nine o'clock on the morning of the 4th two squadrons of White Cuirassiers charged the rearguard of the Chasseurs-à-pied. The latter formed in semicircle, and fired on their assailants at fifty paces ; the result being that one squadron was almost entirely destroyed, men and horses being left on the ground, while the other took to flight at full gallop. Our men had only three wounded.

"The army is full of confidence, and no longer doubts its superiority over the Prussians."

It will be seen—so great were the contradictions of the two armies—that the very incident of the Prussian Cuirassiers is related by the French and the Germans in precisely opposite ways. With regard to the general issue, it would seem that the French, while not so completely driven back as the Prussians reported, were in a less favourable posi-

tion at the close of the day than they had held some hours earlier, and that Faidherbe, on the following day, found it necessary (according to some, on account of his deficient commissariat, but probably for other reasons as well) to retreat within his original lines. The result was certainly not one of those unequivocal successes about which there can be no dispute; but it showed that Faidherbe was at that moment unable to push southward. The events of the northern campaign are in many respects very obscure, and there is a great want of exact information on the subject. The statement of General Manteuffel, however, that his troops closely pursued the retreating French, seems to have little, if any, foundation in fact.

An account of the battle of Bapaume, contained in a letter written by a fusilier of the 33rd Prussian Regiment, gave a tolerably fair report of the progress of events. It stated :—

"On the 3rd of January the enemy commenced an attack upon Bapaume. Our battalion was directed to proceed to Avesnes, and received instructions on its arrival there to march in conjunction with the 5th Company upon Bievillers, and either occupy that village, or take it by storm, if it was still held by the enemy. The 5th Company, which had advanced to the attack, was received at the entrance to the village with a rapid fusillade, and the 4th Company, in consequence, was marched forward for its support towards the western corner of the village, the 1st Company making a slight detour to the right towards the eastern corner. The 2nd and 3rd Companies followed immediately as a reserve, partly thrown out in skirmishing order, and closing up at the corner of the village. Notwithstanding the fire of the enemy, both corners of the village were gained at the first onset without firing. The 1st, 2nd, and 4th Companies took possession of the houses in front, whilst the 3rd remained outside the village as a reserve against any hostile attack. The fight in the village was hand to hand, and became more and more furious every minute. A hostile division made its way into the village, but was checked in its march, and the 3rd Company, which had hitherto remained in reserve, was ordered to the front to charge the enemy, who was wavering under our artillery fire. Before it could come up, the 4th Company was attacked. Captain von Wedell was sent up to take the command of the right wing, as all its officers had been placed *hors de combat*. The adjutant of the battalion, Lieutenant von Plötz, had already been despatched for reinforcements. Meanwhile the fighting was continued with great fury. Captain von Wedell received a wound in the arm, and was compelled to retire, whilst Lieutenant von Bömmelburg received a shot in the breast and another in the hand, and three other lieutenants and an ensign were all placed *hors de combat*. The retreat was then ordered. The 1st Company evacuated the village and took up a position in a ravine in an adjoining field, whence they opened a brisk fire with such effect upon the enemy that he was compelled to remain within the boundary of the village. The other companies retired towards Avesnes, whilst the enemy was fired upon in the village by our artillery. I remained with fifteen men about 300 paces from the village, in a hollow, and fired upon the enemy whenever an attempt was made to advance upon Avesnes and the 4th Company. All our cartridges were now expended, and our muskets were so hot that we had to cool them in snow. The ambulance-assistant Schildat bound up the wounds of those that had been injured, and then, heedless of the hostile shots, fetched ammunition from the dead Frenchmen. All of a sudden we received such a terrible grenade-fire that that at Gravelotte seemed small in comparison, and at the same time hostile columns advanced on every side, which compelled our troops to retreat upon Bapaume. I reached Avesnes with my men, astonished to find myself alive. The grenade-fire continued without intermission, killing numbers of our men in the hedges. The order was given to retire slowly upon Bapaume. At Bapaume, Ensign Preusse, who had been detached on field-guard with fifty men in the morning, and had not hitherto taken part in the combat, collected the remains of the battalion, and soon after orders were given to occupy, in conjunction with the 6th Company, the ruins of an old citadel on the west front of Bapaume. This was at once done, and fortunately just in time to drive back an advancing force of the enemy's skirmishers, and to prevent them from occupying a position which they could have turned to great advantage. All this time we were constantly being saluted with grenades from the enemy, which, however, as a rule, fell into the wall of the citadel or over our heads into the houses behind, several of which were set fire to. The heights behind Bapaume towards Péronne were well maintained by our artillery, and an attack of the enemy against the front and eastern side of Bapaume was brilliantly repulsed. During the night, the 1st Company remained on guard, whilst the rest bivouacked in the town. The French advanced as far as the suburb, which was left undefended, and retained the villages to the north of Bapaume. Those lying on the road to Albert, which the enemy had had possession of during the day, were taken from him by the 8th Rifles and a battalion of the 28th Regiment. The enemy's right wing numbered at least 12,000 men, with a considerable force of artillery, which was admirably served. Our artillery lost many horses, but no guns. The following morning (the 4th), at seven o'clock, we withdrew in battalions and regiments from Bapaume in the direction of Sailly, one brigade following the other. The enemy commenced the retreat upon Arras without attacking. Our battalion, which went into battle with 590 souls, numbered after the battle three officers, twenty-four non-commissioned officers, and 322 men, the remainder being either killed, wounded, or missing."

On the 8th of January General Faidherbe announced, in a despatch to the Commissary a

Lille, dated from Boileux, that his advanced posts touched those of the Prussian army, and daily killed or captured a certain number of the enemy's cavalry. Meanwhile, the siege of Péronne continued. From the 3rd to the 6th of January the town was fired on by the Prussian guns; but the attack then ceased for a time. It is even said that the siege was temporarily raised, and that the guns were withdrawn, after having been damaged by the fire of the besieged. A portion of the town, however, had been set on fire by the Prussian shells, and on the 10th of January the garrison surrendered, to the number of 3,000 men. General Faidherbe expressed great surprise and indignation at this capitulation, alleging that since the 3rd of January he had been manœuvring in front of the Prussian army, on the faith of the fortress still holding out. The loss of Péronne was undoubtedly an unfortunate incident for the French; but it will hereafter be seen that it did not prevent Faidherbe from renewing his movement towards Paris.

The year 1871 was ushered in, both at Versailles and Bordeaux—the head-quarters of the two belligerents—by demonstrations intended to keep up the spirits of each, and to operate on the opinion of the outside world. The King of Prussia had a reception at the Palace of Versailles on the morning of January 1st, on which occasion he remarked:—"Great events must have passed to unite us on such a day and at such a place. I owe it to your heroism and to your perseverance, as well as to the bravery of our troops, that we have achieved such a success. But we have not yet reached our goal. Important tasks are still before us ere we arrive at an honourable and lasting peace. Such a peace will be ensured, if you continue to perform deeds such as have led us to this point. Then we can confidently look to the future for what God, in his gracious will, may vouchsafe us." A banquet was given in the evening, at which the King, addressing his guests, said:—"I raise my glass to welcome the New Year. Upon the past year we look with gratitude; upon that now commencing, with hope. Thanks are due to the army which has sped from victory to victory. But my own thanks are due to the German princes present who belonged to the army before the war, and to those who have since joined it. Our hopes are directed to the crowning of the edifice—an honourable peace." The Grand Duke of Baden afterwards made a long speech on behalf of the other princes, in which the union of Germany was alluded to as happily achieved. "This day," he observed, "is destined to witness the resurrection with renewed vigour of the venerable German Empire. But your Majesty wishes to assume the Imperial Government only when it has thrown its protection around all its members. We, however, regard your Majesty as the supreme head of the German Empire, the crown of which is a guarantee of irrevocable unity." At the conclusion of his speech, the Grand Duke proposed a toast to "King William the Victorious." Nearly a hundred officers were present, and the service of plate was the same which Frederick the Great took to the wars with him.

The demonstration at Bordeaux was of a more public character. Above 50,000 persons assembled in front of the Prefecture on the first day of 1871, which was on Sunday. The street—one of unusual width—was filled for a quarter of a mile with a vast crowd of all classes. National Guards, Marines, sailors, and troops of the Line were present in large numbers, and drilled ranks of children, with banners, gave variety to the scene. The members of the Government appeared on the balcony, and M. Gambetta spoke for a quarter of an hour, and was greeted with the usual exclamations and patriotic songs. He assumed the certainty of their success in resisting Prussia, and said that that success was well-merited—firstly, because France had had faith in herself, and secondly because, on that day, France alone represented justice and right. Referring to the year just closed, he exclaimed:—"Let it be for ever effaced from our memory, this horrible year 1870, which, while it has witnessed the fall of the most deceitful and most corrupt of Governments, has also handed us over to the insolent dominion of the foreigner! We must not forget, citizens, that this reverse of fortune, against which we are battling to-day, is the very work of Buonapartist intrigues abroad. Let each one bear his share of responsibility to history. It was in this very town that the Man of December, the Man of Sedan, the man who tried to gangrene France, uttered the memorable imposture—'The Empire is peace.' His reign, we must confess, had to be endured for our own expiation, for we are to blame for having so long submitted to it. Nothing just or unjust happens in history, but what bears its fruits. It is because we have submitted to this reign of twenty years that we must submit to-day to foreign invasion up to the walls of our glorious capital. And it is because all the sources of power and of grandeur were systematically drained in this country; it is because we had lost that retrieving force, without which nothing can either endure or triumph in this world—namely, the idea of duty and of virtue—that it was thought for a moment France was about to disappear." The Republic, however, springing into life for the third time in

French history, assumed the duty, the honour, and the peril of saving France. M. Gambetta then went on to paint in the darkest colours the condition of the country on the 4th of September. The enemy was advancing by forced marches on Paris. The arsenals were empty, half the army was captured, the resources of the country were scattered, and of the two Governments then existing (he meant the military Government of the Emperor and the civil Government of the Empress) one was captive and the other flying. There was also "a Chamber whose past servility made it incapable of seizing the helm." On that day, no one gainsaid the legitimacy of the Republic. It was not until a later date, when it became clear that the Republic had redeemed its promise to save the honour of the country, to organise the defence, and to maintain order—it was not until it had been proved that through the Republic France would triumph—it was not until then that the adversaries of the new rule, to whom it assured quietude and security, began to contest its legitimacy and question its origin. The Republic, however, was irrevocably established; it was immortal. Nevertheless, people must not confound the Republic with the members of the Government, who had been temporarily lifted into power by the force of events. When they had fulfilled their task, which was to expel the foreigner, they would relinquish their power, and submit themselves to the judgment of their fellow-citizens. M. Gambetta then continued:—"This task—this mission—which has to be wrought out to the end, must be accomplished at any price, to the entire exclusion of self-interest. What we must attain to under heavy penalties is, first, the safety and the liberty of all—perfect liberty—liberty even so far as to submit to disparagement, to calumny, and to abuse; secondly, respect on the part of all, friends and dissentients, for right and the authority of Government. Speech must be as free as thought, and respected in all its digressions up to that fatal limit where it would become a resolve, and lead to acts. If this boundary is overstepped—and I here give expression to the opinion of all the members of the Government—you may rely on energetic repression. I will not close without telling you that the Government, having union for its base, expresses, serves, and presumes to serve, only public opinion, in opposition to those despotic Governments which have preceded us, and have only been guided by their dynastic lust of power." The speech concluded with an enthusiastic reference to the heroic defence of Paris, and with the expression of a hope that they of Bordeaux might soon be cutting their way through the enemy's lines, to convey to the beleaguered garrison the admiration of the world and the imperishable gratitude of France.

M. Gambetta's address was excellently adapted to the purpose it was designed to serve, and the audience to whom it was delivered. It was only by speeches such as this that the spirits of the nation could be maintained under the depressing influence of continual disaster. It was only by assuming a certain divine fury and unconquerable force in the mere fact of a Republic that the class of persons most likely to listen to M. Gambetta could be moved to enthusiasm and to possible action. But there is a great deal in the War Minister's remarks which vanishes into dust at the touch of criticism. That the adversaries of the new rule should have deferred their opposition until the Republic had shown itself successful, is a circumstance incredible in the abstract, and sufficiently disproved by the fact that the speaker was then complaining of opposition, and that the Republic was *not* successful. The assertion that the Republic had assured quietude and security even to its political enemies, is most certainly the very reverse of the fact. The Imperialists were proscribed. Imperial appointments were annulled, Imperial opinions suppressed, and even the Municipal Councils, elected by universal suffrage under the Empire, were supplanted by Commissioners arbitrarily nominated by the existing Administration. M. Gambetta's lofty generalisation, that "speech must be as free as thought, and respected in all its digressions up to that fatal limit where it would become a resolve, and lead to acts." is one of those fine-sounding phrases, with a special proviso on their own behalf, which all Governments are ready to put forth, and to interpret their own way when opposition becomes inconvenient. No Government professes to do more than suppress opinion when it threatens to "become a resolve, and lead to acts;" and in France Republican Governments are quite as ready as Monarchical to make their own humours and jealousies the measure of public freedom. M. Gambetta promised that if the boundary traced on the part of himself and his colleagues were overstepped, the public might rely on "energetic repression." No doubt they might. When are the French public ever disappointed in such an expectation? But it is not easy to see how the Republic, in this respect, differed from the Empire, or how the one Government improved upon the other, in that or anything else.

While on the subject of these New Year utterances, it may be as well to follow out to their complete realisation the anticipations with regard

to the new German Empire expressed by the Grand Duke of Baden in his after-dinner speech at Versailles. King William, in replying to the address of the North German Parliament on December 18th, had said that only in the unanimous voice of the German Princes and Free Towns, and the corresponding wish of the German nation and its representatives, could he recognise the summons of Providence to the throne of a united Germany. of the German Empire the dignity of Emperor, which now for sixty years has been in abeyance, and the requisite provisions having been inserted in the Constitution of the German Confederation, we regard it as a duty we owe to the entire Fatherland to comply with this call of the united German Princes and Free Towns, and to accept the dignity of Emperor." A hope was expressed that the German Empire would lead the Fatherland on to a



UNEARTHING CONCEALED TROOPS.

It was not long before the adhesion of the several States was received by his Majesty; and in consequence of this agreement—an agreement, however, which, as already shown, was more the result of necessity than of choice—a proclamation of the King of Prussia to the German people was forwarded to the Upper and Lower Houses of the Prussian Diet, and received at Berlin on January 18th. This proclamation commenced:—"We, William, by God's grace King of Prussia, hereby announce that, the German Princes and Free Towns having addressed to us a unanimous call to renew and undertake with the re-establishment blessed future "under the auspices of its ancient splendour." The King affirmed that he undertook the Imperial dignity conscious of the duty to protect with German loyalty the rights of the Empire and its members, to preserve peace, to maintain the independence of Germany, and to strengthen the power of the people. He accepted his new title in the hope that it would be granted to the Germans to enjoy in lasting peace the reward of their arduous and heroic struggles, "within boundaries which would give to the Fatherland that security against renewed French attacks which they had lacked for centuries." Finally, his Majesty prayed that God



BATTLE OF ST. QUENTIN.

would grant to him and to his successors that they might be the defenders of the German Empire at all times, "not by martial conquests, but in works of peace within the sphere of national prosperity, freedom, and civilisation."

On the same day (January 18th, the anniversary of the creation of the Prussian kingdom in 1701), the King was proclaimed German Emperor in the Hall of Mirrors of the Palace of Versailles—a gallery built by Louis XIV., decorated by Lebrun, and containing a picture on the ceiling representing France triumphing over discomfited Germany. Detachments of various regiments were present, drawn up on one side of the gallery and in the apartments leading to it; while the other side was occupied by Staff officers, courtiers, regimental officers, and Government officials. The German standards were grouped at the other end of the hall, and in the centre was an altar for religious service. Before the altar stood the Emperor in full uniform, with the Crown Prince at his right hand, and the Princes of Germany in a semicircle behind him. Outside the circle, and some distance apart on the left, stood Count Bismarck, looking pale, but calm and self-possessed, "elevated, as it were"—to adopt the description of Dr. Russell—"by some internal force, which caused all eyes to turn on the great figure with that indomitable face, where the will seems to be master and lord of all." The service was accompanied by instrumental music, performed by a military band, and singing; and the sermon touched on the existing political situation. The Imperial party afterwards moved to the end of the gallery, where the standards were arranged; and here the King delivered a brief speech, at the close of which the Crown Prince made some observations, concluding with a loud cry of "Long live Kaiser Wilhelm!" This was greeted with a tremendous shout. Helmets and caps were waved in the air; the band struck up the National Anthem, and the air throbbed with enthusiasm. The Emperor then received the congratulations of his court. He was greatly agitated, and frequently wiped the tears from his eyes. The rest of the day was spent in banquets and rejoicings, and the Versaillese stood sullenly about, watching the military demonstrations of their conquerors.

The new Emperor afterwards issued an order of the day to the army, in reference to his acceptance of the Imperial dignity, and addressed a letter to the Grand-Duke of Baden, in which he said:—"I accept the title of German Emperor, not in the sense of making a claim to power, for in the most glorious periods of our history the strength of Germany was used to the prejudice of her internal development, but with the firm determination, with God's grace, to be, as a German Prince, the faithful defender of all rights, and to wield the sword of Germany for her own defence. Germany, strong in the unanimity of her princes and her peoples, has regained her place in the councils of nations, and the German people neither requires nor wishes, outside its own frontiers, anything beyond the attainment of international intercourse based upon mutual respect for the independence of each, and the united furtherance of the general welfare." His Imperial Majesty also addressed letters, in nearly the same words, to all the Sovereigns and Republics of Germany, announcing his assumption of the Imperial dignity. In his letter to the Bremen Senate, he said he had assumed this dignity, "not with a view to the realisation of those claims to extraneous power, in enforcing which our domestic affairs were but too much neglected in some glorious epochs of our history; but with the firm purpose, under God's blessing, and as a truly German sovereign, to protect the right and wield the sword of Germany for the furtherance of justice." When once the German army had obtained such a frontier as would protect the country from France, the new Empire would become a realm of peace and happiness, in which the the nation would possess and enjoy what it had striven after for centuries.

The Upper House of the Prussian Diet, on the 18th of January, addressed a telegram to the Emperor, giving expression to the joyful assent of the Chamber to the newly-created dignity of German Emperor; to which the monarch responded in a telegraphic message, saying, "May it be vouchsafed to me to lay for a united Germany the foundation-stone of a glorious history, such as Prussia can show to-day after a period of seven hundred years!" The Lower House of the Diet, on the following day, voted an address in reply to the proclamation from Versailles. The Polish members dissented; but that was the only opposition. Thus, all was harmonious in an external or official sense; but beneath the surface there was a good deal of heartburning. Dr. Russell, writing on the great day, said:—"I am assured that those most concerned did not desire the change. The Brandenburgers, who are the backbone of Prussia, as Prussia is the bone and muscle of Germany, did not, and do not, wish for it. What Germany may gain, Prussia may lose. 'Now,' said a sturdy son of Brandenburg to me to-day, 'now begins the war of Germany against Prussia. They hate us—these poor Hanoverians, Hessians, Badeners, Bavarians, Saxons, Würtembergers; they hate our very name,

because we have made them a nation. You will see that they will begin their hostilities as soon as they can. The Reichstadt will transfer the seat of Government from Berlin to some old Imperial city, and they will bite and nibble, and bark and gnaw, at everything Prussian, till there is nothing left." The fears of this gloomy prophet were, no doubt, exaggerated, but they were not altogether baseless. There was no old historic ground on which Berlin could claim to be the capital of the whole of Germany —nothing in its antecedents which appealed to a wide national sentiment, such as to over-rule all local or provincial jealousies. Germany had never had any clearly-defined centre; and it remained to be seen whether the attempt to create one out of a city which, until the commencement of last century, was simply the insignificant capital of a remote province, would commend itself to the general mind of the country, whose associations with Imperial dominion were certainly not connected with the sombre city on the banks of the Spree. Nothing aided the amalgamation of the separate Italian States into one Power so much as the fact that at the heart of the peninsula was a city of splendid Imperial memories—the seat of an ancient and majestic rule, which for centuries had given laws, not only to Italy, but almost to the whole civilised world—a city in which every Italian found the very heart-throbs of his national life. That the House of Savoy, by its courage, its patriotism, and its policy, led the Italian people out of bondage into freedom, and out of division into union, was much; but it would not have sufficed had there been no indisputable centre round which the scattered forces could rally, and before which all sectional pretensions would at once strike their flags. Had there ever been a question of annexing Italy to Sardinia, and of making Turin the capital, it is very certain that Florence, Genoa, Pisa, Venice, Milan, Naples, and many other cities, to say nothing of the greatest of all, would have repudiated the leadership. No such feeling could exist where Rome was the avowed object of all parties to the movement for emancipation and unity. Where the Cæsars had ruled—where the dominion of the Western World was throned—where many races of Europe, Asia, and Africa had acknowledged their supreme metropolis—where even yet the greatest division of Christendom looks for its sovereign edicts and its ancient law—it could be no dishonour to the proudest of Italian provincial cities to obey. To say that neither Berlin nor any other Teutonic city bore any such relationship to Germany as this, would be an idle observation. The whole history of the world affords no parallel to Rome. It would be more to the purpose to remark that Germany had no city occupying towards the rest of the Fatherland a position equivalent to that of London towards England, of Paris towards France, or of Moscow towards Russia. This was a consideration which had to be taken into account in estimating the chances of perpetuity of the work commenced by Prussia in 1866, and finished in 1871. Still, it should not have been forgotten that the German race was far less influenced by sentiment than the Latin; and that this want of a traditional capital might not have the same effect in the calm and practical North that would have been seen in regions nearer to the sun, and peopled by nations of a quicker blood.

A much more serious question was that which had reference to the future policy of Germany as the leading Power of Europe. The extreme eagerness of the new Emperor to insist on the peaceful designs of united Germany—to picture the whole Teutonic race as intent, now that its destiny was accomplished, on inaugurating Saturnian times of commerce, philosophy, and universal brotherhood —was a little too suggestive of the French proverb about the self-accusation that is implied in self-excuse, to be entirely satisfactory. His Imperial Majesty protested too much; and the previous history of Germany in general, and of Prussia in particular, gave but little support to such radiant assurances. The old German Empire, from its establishment in the ninth century to its demise in 1806—when, on the institution of the Confederation of the Rhine, Francis II. abdicated the Imperial Crown, declared the dissolution of the Germanic Empire, and took the title of Emperor of Austria—seldom promoted the internal peace and prosperity of the country, and had few claims on the gratitude and respect of either Germany or Europe. The steps by which Prussia had reached her position of supreme power were hardly paralleled in the history of the world for rapacity, craft, and open violence. The small Electorate of Brandenburg grew up into the Kingdom of Prussia, and that into one of the greatest military monarchies of Europe, by a series of attacks upon the independence of other States—attacks which were never restrained by considerations of right, humanity, or honour. The invasion and annexation of Silesia by Frederick the Great was only the most extreme instance of a policy which had been steadily pursued for more than a century and a half. The three partitions of Poland were crimes in which Prussia, it is true, did not stand alone; but the first partition was mainly her work, and the two others had her hearty co-operation. The opposition to the first French Republic, which entailed upon Europe

nearly a quarter of a century of bloodshed, was due in no small measure to Prussia; and but lately there had been seen the despoiling of Denmark, of several of the German States, and of France, that the Hohenzollerns might be enriched. Europe was now told that Prussia was satisfied, and that nothing further would be demanded. This might be so, but it was only natural that Europe should regard the future with some distrust.

Whatever might have been the feeling of thoughtful politicians with regard to the prospects of the country under its new conditions, the enthusiasm of the people of Berlin was great when the Emperor's proclamation to the Diet was read in the streets. All the public places were crowded, and the announcement was received with repeated cheers. At night the houses were illuminated, flags were hung out, and "The Watch by the Rhine" was sung again and again. A large crowd stood round the statue of Frederick the Great, incessantly cheering Queen Augusta as Empress of the Germans; but her Majesty did not make any response.

Prussia, notwithstanding these great successes, was not entirely free from internal troubles and dissensions. On the 3rd of January four German bankers were tried at Berlin on a charge of high treason, in having subscribed for a French loan while their country was at war with France. An account of the trial published in the English press stated that "the gentlemen thus accused were Messrs. George Güterbock, of Berlin; Kulp and St. Goar, of Frankfort-on-the-Main; and G. H. Levita, of Antwerp. From the evidence it appeared that the prisoners had telegraphed to London for scrip, thereby supplying irrefragable proof of their offence, but at the same time clearly showing they had not reflected on the culpable nature of the act. Instead, however, of basing their defence upon this latter circumstance, counsel preferred bringing forward excuses which, while they did not remove the guilt, were calculated to veil the fact that it had been incurred by mere inadvertency. The Court, regarding these excuses as disproved by the wording of their telegrams, found the prisoners guilty. Herr Güterbock, who had ordered the largest sum, 17,000*l.*, was sentenced to two years' imprisonment in a fortress. Kulp, who had telegraphed for 4,000*l.*, was let off with nine months', probably because he stated that he was a naturalised French subject. Herren St. Goar and Levita, who had asked respectively for 10,000*l.* and 5,000*l.*, got six months' and three months', as, their order not having been carried out, the crime was not completed. After the trial, all the prisoners were set at liberty on bail." On the 10th of January, Dr. Max Hirsch, editor of a newspaper called the *Workmen's Friend*, appealed to the Kammergericht against a sentence of two months' imprisonment. He had been prosecuted for high treason on account of an article on Napoleon's imprisonment at Wilhelmshöhe. The Court acquitted him, on the ground that under the new criminal code, which came into operation in North Germany on the 1st, he had only indulged in free criticism. In the Würtemberg Chamber of Deputies, on the 4th, Herr Hopf opposed the vote of money for the prosecution of the war, alleging that it had degenerated into a war of conquest. He did not get any one to support him; but incidents such as these showed the undertone of dissent which existed beneath the haughty notes of triumph and self-praise.

The greatest shadow on the brightness, however, was in the frightful scenes of suffering, consequent on the war, to be witnessed in many places. The Cassel correspondent of the *Times*, writing on January 4th, gave a description of a horrible sight he had just beheld. "About 1,500 prisoners arrived at midnight, on their way from Frankfort to Stettin, in open railway trucks, no other carriages being available. When the train started from Frankfort in the morning, the thermometer was above freezing point; but in the course of the day such a sudden change set in that in the evening the glass marked many degrees below it. The prisoners were scantily clothed, some without great-coats, which they had sold, buying tobacco with the money; others had thin cotton stockings and wooden shoes; others again had nothing at all on their feet. Lying in the same open trucks which conveyed them from Epernay, exposed to the intense cold, they were in many instances frozen to the boards in their own filth. One of them at least —some people speak of more—was frozen to death. They were in a most terrible and pitiable plight, and the groaning of some of the poor sufferers was fearful. After their arrival, they were distributed in the waiting-rooms of the station and in the barracks, where they received restoratives in the shape of coffee, soup, and meat. Warm clothes and blankets were also given to many of them, and they continued their journey after a stoppage of fifteen hours, with the exception of about twenty, who were sent to the Lazarette." Such are the fruits of war, even when waged between nations the most civilised; such are the agonies, the degradations, and the sordid woes, out of which military Empires are created, for the admiration and the terror of the world!

CHAPTER X.

Movements of Göben and Faidherbe—Manteuffel sent to command the Army of the East—St. Quentin taken by the French (January 16th)—Fighting at Roussy and Vaux on January 18th—Faidherbe's Designs—Attack by the Prussians on January 19th—Positions of the French—Progress of the Action—The French routed—St. Quentin retaken by the Prussians—Report of General Faidherbe—Retreat of the French to Cambrai, and afterwards to Valenciennes and Douai—General von Göben, "the Moltke of the Future"—Visit of M. Gambetta to Lille—Unsuccessful Expedition of General Peltingeas towards Rouen—The French obliged to fall back on Havre—Peltingeas Superseded—Criticisms of the *Journal du Havre*—Vacillation of the Military Authorities—Surrender of Mézières and of Rocroy—M. Michel Chevalier on the Position of England towards Prussia—Meetings in London to express Sympathy with France—The English Policy of Neutrality—French Complaints against England—German Complaints against England—The Common-sense of the Matter—Desire for Peace.

IT is certain that the Prussians, if they pursued the troops of Faidherbe at all after the battle of Bapaume (as they allege they did), pursued them a very little way, and for a very brief time. This is evident from the fact that, shortly after the indecisive struggle, the army of General Göben stood south of the ground on which the action took place, whereas Faidherbe, in the first instance, moved towards the north, and, if pursued at all, must have been pursued in *that* direction. The Prussians kept very quiet as to their movements for several days after the battle; but it is clear from other accounts that they speedily withdrew southward, and concentrated their attention on the important task of defending the road to Paris, instead of making any attempt to drive the enemy into the English Channel. In the meanwhile, General Manteuffel was superseded in the command of the Army of the North by General Göben, the former commander being sent to take charge of a new Army of the East, formed by the corps of General Werder and the Seventh Westphalian Army Corps of General von Zastrow. A German soldier, writing on the 13th of January from Dompierre, to the south of Bapaume, said that several bridges across the river Somme had been blown up, so that the Prussians had now, in the riverain territory, a well-marked line of demarcation between them and the enemy, which could be strengthened by flooding the meadows, the invaders having possession of the locks of the ship-canal running parallel with the natural stream. "The destruction of the Somme bridges," continues this writer, "was caused by reports to the effect that the French foreposts had been pushed forward beyond Bapaume as far as the villages of Tilloy and Ligny, and upon the road to Albert. In consequence of this offensive movement of the enemy, the Commander-in-chief of the First Army, General von Göben, withdrew the Staff of his Eighth Corps from the village of Dompierre, where it has lain since the 4th of January, to Amiens, whilst our battalion is attached to the 40th Infantry Brigade again. General von Göben has retained the special command of the Eighth Corps in his own hands, notwithstanding the command-in-chief of the First Army being assigned to him. The reconnaissances made daily by our rifles from here into the flooded valleys of the Somme are very interesting, and bear a great resemblance to gigantic duck-shooting expeditions. At present, as long as Faidherbe does not push forward his troops any further, we have only to do with an imaginary foe. The cartridges in the bread-bags are ready for the moment that our cavalry signal the approach of hostile columns, to change the pleasure party into real combatants." The same correspondent, writing from Proyart on the 15th of January, said:—"Extraordinary activity has been displayed in the French lines since this morning. Hostile infantry battalions, with artillery, are marching from Albert (which was filled with the enemy's troops yesterday) along the right bank of the Somme as far as Cappy. Bray has been evacuated by our troops, and we wait with impatience for the moment when the bridge over the Somme at Cappy shall be blown into the air." It is proved by the testimony of this German that the Prussians were at that time on the defensive, and that they moved south, not north, after the battle of Bapaume.

Having recovered from his partial discomfiture on the 3rd of January, General Faidherbe re-formed his ranks, summoned reinforcements to his more shattered regiments, and advanced on Albert, south of Bapaume, which he reached on the 14th of January. Here he heard that the Prussians at St. Quentin were demanding of the inhabitants a sum of 548,000 francs; and he resolved to make a vigorous attempt to put an end to their exactions. He therefore despatched towards St. Quentin a flying column under the orders of Colonel Isnard, who encountered the Prussians at Castelet-Bellicourt, and pursued them, killing and wounding thirty men. Colonel Isnard entered St. Quentin on the 16th of January, rescued a number of French prisoners detained there, and seized a considerable store of provisions, some baggage, and two guns.

The French alleged that the Germans evacuated the town in disorder; but however this may be, they certainly withdrew. According to an account published in the *Observateur d'Anvers* (which of course represented the French view of events), the report of the approach of Colonel Isnard's troops



THE PRUSSIANS AT VERSAILLES.

reached St. Quentin about half-past seven in the morning. Several hundred men, including a number of Zouaves of the Nord, poured out by all the exits from the town, attacking various scattered bodies of Prussians, and taking several prisoners. The rest of the German garrison, with their guns, succeeded in reaching the road to Ham (lying to the south of St. Quentin); and, at about eleven o'clock A.M., a large body of French troops, with ten guns, entered the town, while others posted themselves in the villages round about. Skirmishing continued for some time, and the Prussians, in retreating, sent a few shells into the town; but these appear to have done no mischief. Two of the townspeople, however, were shot dead in the streets on leaving their homes to go to their business. On the French troops taking possession of the town, Colonel Isnard posted up a notice enjoining all inhabitants who might have German soldiers in their houses to make a declaration to that effect to the French military authorities, on pain of being prosecuted according to law. St. Quentin was the town so valorously defended by the populace on the 8th of October, 1870, when the Prussians were driven off, but which was compelled to surrender on the 21st of the same month.

More fighting followed two days later. The main body of Faidherbe's army had left its cantonments on the 16th for Ervillers and Mézières-sur-Oise, and one of the advanced brigades encountered



IN THE BATTLE OF ST. QUENTIN.

the Prussian vanguard at Roussy on the morning of the 18th. A French brigade halted on the road, to allow the rest of the army and the convoys to come up; and in the meanwhile another brigade, which had arrived at Vaux, was attacked by the Prussians, supported by a battery of twelve guns. The French were admittedly taken by surprise—a fact which was attributed to the cavalry being then at St. Quentin, so that no scouts could be sent out. The struggle continued from half-past ten in the morning until half-past three in the afternoon. "The 43rd Regiment of the Line," wrote a French officer, "sustained the shock alone during a certain time without becoming broken, and was afterwards reinforced by the 20th Battalion of Foot Chasseurs. Such a vigorous resistance could not be made without losses, and this brave regiment had five officers and 100 men *hors de combat* after the engagement. The Mobiles of the Guard were charged by cavalry, and could not resist the shock; but the Mobiles of the Seine and Marne sustained the charge with the greatest coolness, and compelled the cavalry to retreat. Notwithstanding the impetuosity and suddenness of the attack, the 1st Brigade, though not reinforced by the 2nd, which remained inactive on the road to Roussy, continued to march forward, and reached Mézières-sur-Oise and Sery-les-Mézières. The enemy, therefore, had not been able to arrest the march of the division commanded by General du Bessel. The 23rd Corps rushed to their guns, believing a serious engagement imminent, but arrived from the direction of Vaux when the 1st Brigade had already reached Serancourt. The columns thus sent as supports suffered heavily, and abandoned some wagons." This action, however, was but the prelude to a far more important battle on the following day, when the momentary gleam of success which had lighted up the fortunes of Faidherbe was obscured by a very serious disaster.

The object of the French commander in advancing with the main body of his troops on the 16th of January was stated by himself in a report addressed to the Minister of War. His immediate design was to turn the right flank of the army opposed to him, and thus to threaten the line of La Fère, Chauny Noyon, and Compiègne; his ultimate intention was to assist the Army of Paris in a sortie which had been fixed for the 19th of January, and which proved to be the last desperate attempt of the beleaguered garrison to pierce the circle of steel by which they were hemmed in. He admitted that he knew he should draw upon himself a crushing force; but he added that there were circumstances under which it is a duty to sacrifice oneself. The troops which he had to encounter formed the main body of the German Army of the North, and were directed against him, as he reported, from Rheims, Laon, La Fère, Ham, Péronne, Paris, Amiens, and Normandy. General von Göben had certainly been reinforced since the early days of the month; but so also had Faidherbe, and it is said by some authorities that the latter was even now numerically stronger than his adversary. He established his head-quarters at St. Quentin on the 17th of January. On the 18th, as we have seen, two brigades, in advance of the main body, were severely handled to the south of St. Quentin; and on the 19th Faidherbe was attacked at nine o'clock in the morning by the full strength of the Prussians, who advanced from the heights overlooking the villages of Grugis and Castres. The villages themselves were occupied by a French division under the command of General Gislin. The *Daily News* correspondent with the army of General von Göben, describing the position of the French, said:—"To fully appreciate it, you must picture St. Quentin situated within a hollow, enclosed by hills; which hilly circle is separated by a valley from a second similar circumvallation. Eastward of this natural fortress, about 5,000 paces from the second height, between St. Quentin and Savy, is a thick forest of considerable length, separated by a plain of about 500 paces from a second forest, less extensive than the former, still more westward towards the road to Péronne, near Vermand. The French army was so posted on the second height as to have its left wing eastward of St. Quentin; the right beyond the second forest; and the bulk behind both forests, the forests being lined with soldiers. Two batteries were, in a masterly fashion, placed behind the height separating the two forests, so as to be entirely concealed, their existence merely being known by the smoke after the discharge. On our side there was the Sixteenth Division on the right; the Third Cavalry Division on the left; the Fifteenth Division in the centre. The respective batteries were with their divisions, and the artillery corps kept in reserve. Altogether we had 35,000 men. As far as I could learn from French prisoners, the army of General Faidherbe, reinforced at St. Quentin, numbered no less than 65,000." There would seem to have been both understatement and overstatement here.

The French in Grugis and Castres were furiously assailed by the Germans, and at the same time firing was going on in the direction of Savy. The division of General Derojà marched to the heights where a mill called the mill of Tout Vent is situated, and to the crests of Roulieu, its right leaning on the

canal. Subsequently, when Bessel's division advanced up the acclivities in the rear, Derojà's columns, supported on the left, reached the heights of Neuville and Mesnil St. Laurent. The line of battle now extended from Holmont Savy, by Grugis, the mill of Tout Vent, and Roulieu-la-Neuville, to Mesnil St. Laurent. After an hour's fighting, the French were obliged to abandon their positions, and the Prussians attacked their whole line with a powerful artillery force. The Twenty-third French Corps was unfortunately separated from the Twenty-second by the Crozat Canal; the two corps were therefore unable to form a junction, except by following a circuitous route through St. Quentin. The Prussian Tirailleurs, descending from the crests of Stancourt, threw themselves upon the French with such suddenness and confidence that the latter, doubting whether they were really hostile troops, allowed them to advance within a short distance, for fear of making a mistake. When, however, the true character of the on-coming force was discovered, the French opened a terrific fire, which turned the enemy back, and strewed the field with dead. The Germans then pushed forward their battalions in masses, and General Bessel advanced a battery of four guns against them; but this proved to be quite insufficient, the guns being soon dismounted by the converging fire of several Prussian batteries. The smaller battery of the French was soon replaced by one of twelve guns, and a terrible artillery duel went on for some time. General Bessel, while overlooking and directing this part of the action, received a serious wound from a piece of shell in the stomach. In other directions the Prussian advance was checked for a time, and a battery of eight guns, in position at the Maison de Roulieu, made itself seriously felt by the opposing Prussian battery. "Towards two o'clock," says an account of the battle written by a French officer, "the whole Prussian line receded in front of the Twenty-second Corps, but the Twenty-third was losing ground. General Faidherbe ordered several battalions of the Twenty-second Corps to go to the assistance of the Twenty-third. It is not known whether this help arrived in time; but it is certain that the Twenty-third Corps gave way visibly, and was soon in full retreat. It was then two or three P.M. The Twenty-second Corps at that time had gained too much ground; for its line, forming an arc of a circle, extended, as the advance was made, to a dangerous degree, because the line was thus becoming extremely narrow. The danger was all the more serious, as the French reserves were few, and the enemy had concentrated his forces on three or four points in close columns, with which he could at a given moment drive in the thin line of the French army at any point chosen for an advance. That, indeed, is what happened. Towards half-past three, the Mobiles of the Twenty-third Corps began to falter. Nevertheless, they were rallied behind the ambulance of Canchy, and placed in rank with the reserve Zouaves of the North, with orders to protect the retreat. In front of Derojà's division, a strong Prussian column was trying to execute a turning movement on the left of the French; but a battery of eight guns, under orders of M. Montebello, arrested the Prussians, and inflicted enormous losses on them." It is asserted by this writer that at four o'clock no position had been abandoned, but that the order of retreat was given to the Twenty-third Corps, probably on account of General Paulze d'Ivoy's division of the Twenty-second Corps being unable to resist the Prussian attack. It is admitted that the retreat of the Twenty-third Corps, although at first orderly, became precipitate and broken when the Prussian batteries showed themselves on the hills commanding the French positions, and opened fire on them. General Faidherbe endeavoured to restore confidence by sending some battalions of the Twenty-second Corps to protect the retreat of their comrades; but an uncontrollable panic soon set in. The battle, however, was sustained for some time longer by the Twenty-second Corps. Even here some Mobiles gave way, but were rallied and placed in front of the regiment of Zouaves of the North, who are spoken of as a very fine and daring body of men. At length further resistance became hopeless, and the whole French line was in retreat. All the troops passed through St. Quentin under the fire of the Prussians, who bombarded the town, took it by storm, and followed the discomfited French for some distance. The pursuit, however, slackened with approaching night, and Faidherbe moved northwards towards Cambrai without further molestation. When the troops entered that town, many of them were shoeless and in rags, and the whole force was greatly disorganised.

The French commander, in his report to the Minister of War on this unfortunate affair, made no attempt to deny that he was vanquished. He wrote:—

"The Army of the North completely maintained its positions (which were very good) until the evening; but then the continual arrival of fresh troops to the enemy, and the exhausted state of our troops, rendered it necessary that the order to retreat upon Cambrai should be given. The corps of General Leconte was ordered to take the road by Cateau, that of General Paulze d'Ivoy that by Castelet, while I, with the

cavalry, took an intermediate road which passes by Monbrechain. The heads of two Prussian columns then entered St. Quentin, one by the La Fère road, and the other by the Paris road. The enemy began to collect, firstly, the wounded; secondly, the large number of men who, under different pretexts, had remained in the town, instead of being in their places in the battle; thirdly, all those unfortunate men who, worn out by fatigue and suffering from hunger, after four days of forced marches and two days of fighting, were unable to effect a retreat of eleven leagues through the mud on a cold, dark night; finally, some of those brave soldiers who sacrificed themselves in the rear-guard to cover the retreat. This is the extent of their trophies. They made no prisoners on the field of battle, and we have brought back intact our twelve batteries of division, and our three batteries of reserve. Our four divisions being reduced, by six weeks of operations and fighting, to 6,000 or 7,000 men each, we had but little more than 25,000 combatants at the battle of St. Quentin. The First German Army, having been reinforced by several corps, may be estimated at double the strength of our forces."

According to a Versailles telegram from the Emperor William to the Empress, the French loss at St. Quentin was 15,000 men, including 11,000 prisoners. It is also said by the Germans that the enemy lost six guns, though Faidherbe, it will be observed, affirms that his batteries were untouched. On the day after the battle, the French withdrew still further north to Valenciennes and Douai, and the Prussians again occupied Cambrai.

General von Göben, to whom this new success of the Prussians was due, had already acquired a high name for vigour and penetration. By some he was called the Moltke of the future, and he was generally regarded as a man of great ability in the science of war. One of the newspaper correspondents saw a friend, the commander of a Prussian regiment, holding the plan of the order of battle in his hand on the morning of the 19th, and admiring it as a masterpiece of strategy. The peculiarity of Göben's disposition, according to this authority, is the exactness with which every detail of a battle is arranged beforehand, though this is done in such a way that each part works for itself for a certain time, scarcely knowing that it is connected with the others until the moment comes when all are to act together as a whole. Göben is apparently indifferent how many men perish on a march, as long as the march is completed within the given time. Notwithstanding this severity of discipline, he was popular with his troops during the northern campaign. The men felt that they could rely on him; and, while wearily tramping through snow and mud, they would say, "Well, Göben knows that all this is necessary," and so would hold on with unflagging spirit. General Manteuffel was accused of slowness, and to this defect was attributed the fact of Faidherbe not having been already beaten in a decisive manner. The energy of Göben admirably seconded the astuteness and prevision of Moltke. The Commander-in-chief at Versailles fixed almost to a day the time when Göben would be operating at St. Quentin. He therefore detached the 16th Brigade from the beleaguering force before the capital, and sent it off, together with a few guns. When it had done its work in the north, it returned to Paris; and in this way it was made useful in two places, without the siege of the great city being materially prejudiced.

Very shortly after the defeat of General Faidherbe at St. Quentin, M. Gambetta paid a visit to Lille. He arrived there on the afternoon of January 21st, and his coming was unknown until a very short time before he reached the town. As soon as he was recognised, a cry was raised in the streets, and great numbers of persons ran towards the railway station. The Minister got into a carriage and drove to the Prefecture, where of course he made a patriotic speech, advocating a policy of resistance to the utmost. He denounced before the public opinion of France the tactics of those who took advantage of partial checks to declare the continuation of the war impossible, and who endeavoured to bring about peace by a surprise. He protested against any idea of dictatorship; proclaimed that all Frenchmen must do their duty, in the name of French unity and the French Revolution; and concluded his speech by asserting that, if they prosecuted the war, the ruin of the enemy and the final success of France were certain, in spite of temporary defeats. On the following day (Sunday, the 22nd), M. Gambetta received many deputations from the townspeople, to whom he delivered an address, declaring that France would rather keep up an eternal war than allow herself to be mutilated. Prussia, he said, was nearly at the end of her resources. Germany was empty, and all her population under arms. Her thought was dead, her commerce was destroyed, and ruin was everywhere throughout the land. Another three months, therefore, would suffice to annihilate the existing prospects of the enemy, if not the Prussian army itself. All he himself desired was to see the country saved—not by a man, but by an idea, and that idea the Republic. As soon as the Republic was definitively established, he wished for nothing more than to re-enter the crowd to which he belonged. Notwithstanding all these assurances, M. Gambetta made a very poor impression at Lille. The people of the town were not Republican, and therefore did

not sympathise with him on the political ground. They had seen too much of the ruin of the Army of the North to believe in his prophecies of victory; and they desired the conclusion of the war, that their trade might not be utterly destroyed, and their homes broken up. M. Gambetta was described as looking much older than he had looked a few months before. He seemed grave and depressed, in spite of his confident language. His faith in General Faidherbe, however, appeared to be unbounded, and in no degree disturbed by that commander's defeat at St. Quentin. So little gratified was the War Minister with his reception at Lille, that he left the town early on the morning of January 23rd, escorted to the station only by the Prefect (an old Paris friend of his, just appointed to that post), and a few other officials.

The new commander at Havre, General Peltingeas, did not fulfil the expectations that had been formed of him. He was accused of inaction, and it was remarked that, as he had at his disposal 36,000 Mobiles and Sedentary National Guards, together with a considerable number of Francs-tireurs and regulars, he ought to have made some vigorous attempt to capture Rouen. For the most part, however, he employed his men in desultory skirmishes, which were productive of no important results, though occasionally some small Prussian detachment would be temporarily pushed back, with a slight loss in killed and wounded, or a certain number of prisoners would be taken. These successes were certainly of the most insignificant character; but in justice to General Peltingeas it should be recollected that the troops with which he was obliged to conduct his operations were for the most part those which had made so precipitate and disgraceful a retreat from Rouen when the Prussians attacked them on the 4th of December. Before anything could be done with these men, it was absolutely necessary to subject them to a course of severe discipline. Courts-martial were accordingly instituted; some rigorous sentences were passed; and drunkenness, which before had been very common, was at any rate greatly checked. These reforms were mainly due to Captain Manchez, a naval officer, who, as previously related, had the chief command in the town for a short time. When General Peltingeas arrived, on the 29th of December, the troops at Havre were in a somewhat better condition than that in which they had arrived from Rouen; but still they were not very reliable. The general had been sent at the request of Captain Manchez, in order that field operations might be conducted against the Prussians; and it was thought that he would do something to clear that part of Normandy of the invaders. The plan was, that at the head of all the forces which could be spared from the defence of Havre he should march on Rouen simultaneously with the movements of General Roy towards the same city by way of La Bouille, and of General Faidherbe against Amiens by the route of Bapaume. On this expedition General Peltingeas set forth about the close of the old year; but in a few days he was obliged to fall back to his original positions in front of Havre, and on the 6th of January (the day after his return) the town was threatened by a body of 200 Prussians, who threw shells into the neighbouring village of Gainneville, but, on being opposed by a company of Mobilised National Guards, retired towards Bolbec. On the 10th, a body of 500 German cavalry and infantry attacked the French advanced posts before Havre, and were again repulsed, the infantry, it is said, retreating in carriages towards St. Romain, a town situated about twelve miles to the east of Havre. The main body of the French were at this time in cantonments not more than five or six miles from Havre, beyond which point it was evident that they could not penetrate, though they greatly outnumbered their enemies. How far this was the fault of the commander, and how far that of the troops themselves, it is not easy to determine; but the Delegate Government at Bordeaux, regarding General Peltingeas as a failure, superseded him by General Loysel. He had been in command of the army barely a fortnight; and it may perhaps be urged on his behalf that he had hardly time to prove whether he was competent or not, considering that his soldiers were none of the best. But his vaunt, on reaching Havre, that he would only leave it dead or victorious, must have made his failure doubly pitiable when he found himself unable to achieve either distinction. Shortly afterwards, the services of General Robin were dispensed with, in consequence, it would seem, of his not giving sufficient support to Faidherbe; and he was succeeded by Colonel Isnard, who had shown vigour and ability in the taking of St. Quentin.

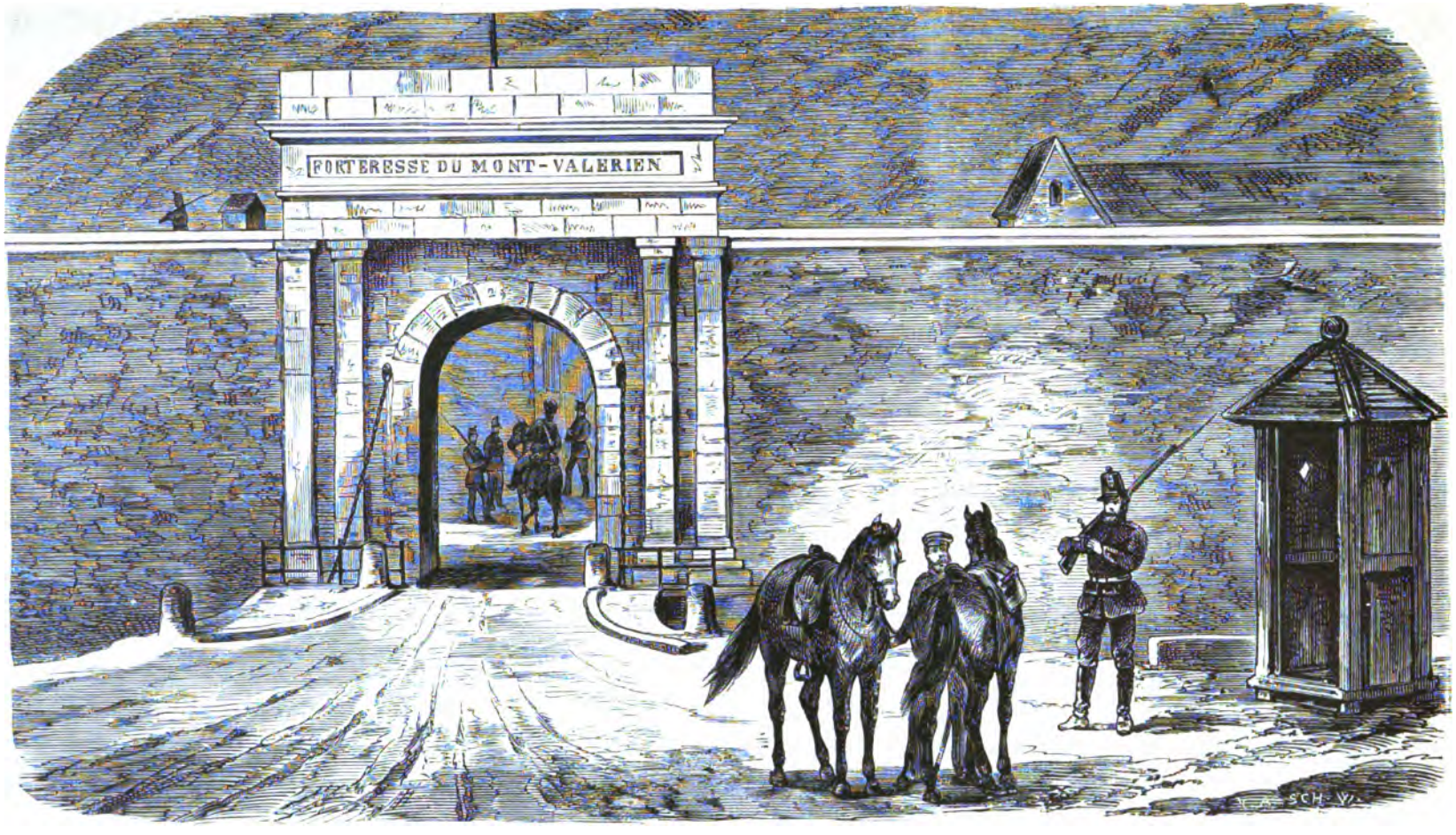
The motives which determined the retreat of General Peltingeas, when on his expedition to Rouen, have been variously stated, but are not very clear. "Some people," wrote a correspondent of the *Standard* from Havre, "say it was on account of the weather; others ascribe it to the deficiency of the commissariat arrangements—a reason which is an odd one when it is borne in mind that the French were operating in the wealthiest and most fertile part of the most fertile and wealthiest of French agricultural districts; some again ascribe

the retreat to a desire on the part of Peltingeas to send reinforcements across the Seine to General Roy, whom, after his defeat at La Bouille, it was reasonable to suppose the Prussians would pursue. The retreat of his column was effected in an orderly manner, but at the cost of no small fatigue to the men." Some observations in the *Journal du Havre* expressed very pungently the feeling of anxiety excited in the north-west.

"The Army of Havre, instead of keeping within cantonments at our very gates, was about to march in advance, and try to clear the right bank of the Seine, whilst the army under General Roy was to perform a like service on the left bank. Gun-boats were at the same time to be sent up the river, and would have materially contributed to the success of this combined movement. The junction between the column of Roy and the Army of Havre was naturally to take place at Rouen, the re-capture of which, independently of all strategical considerations, could not but produce a great moral impression. This movement would, moreover, have materially contributed to the general defence, as Manteuffel would have had to meet at once both the advance on Rouen and the attack of General Faidherbe. It may be that this plan will make professional soldiers shrug their shoulders; nevertheless it is the only one which the topography of the country points out as practicable, and that is a consideration which 'professional men' who have been unable to keep open a tidal river like the Seine can hardly afford to sneer at. We will not inquire what may be the designs of the War Office at Bordeaux, where, it seems, the pretension is entertained of directing the military operations throughout France; we will not even inquire whether it has any plans or designs whatever; but we are driven to acknowledge that the Prussians give us cruelly cogent proofs that they are our masters in strategy. Instead of remaining immovable in his positions, the enemy, by his marches and countermarches, finds means of quadrupling his forces. On the 6th, Manteuffel conveyed by rail from Amiens to Rouen not less than five regiments, whilst the force that had beaten us on the 4th at La Bouille feigned a retreat, so that Roy's small Army Corps was preparing to resume the offensive. That was the position on the 6th. Mark what took place on the following day. We know from an official source that Rouen was completely evacuated. The Prussians have built a



GENERAL FAIDHERBE.



ENTRANCE TO MONT VALÉRIEN.

pontoon-bridge across the Seine at Jumièges (a little lower down than Duclair), by means of which the troops at Rouen and in its vicinity hastened to support their comrades engaged with General Roy; and before we even suspected their presence, 12,000 Prussians vigorously attacked us at Bourgtheroulde, Bourg-Achard, Rougemontier, and Corneville. They captured all those positions, and before the day was over held the whole line from Montfort to Routot. The river Rille appears to form the furthest limit of the retreat of our troops."

The vacillation of the military authorities at Havre knew no end. On the 7th of January, in consequence of pressing telegrams from General Roy, they determined to send troops to his assistance, *viâ* Honfleur; and at one o'clock A.M. on the morning of the following day, a regiment of the Line was brought from the outposts, and marched down to the quay to be embarked. The intention, however, was soon abandoned. The men, after bivouacking in the mud until ten o'clock in the morning, were marched back again. Their appearance, we are told by the *Standard* correspondent, spoke of great privations and hard campaigning; their uniforms were covered with mud and squalid filth, and several of the men were so feeble that they could hardly stand.

Mézières, ten miles west of Sedan, capitulated on the 2nd of January. Two thousand prisoners, including ninety-eight officers, fell to the lot of the conquerors, and 106 guns likewise passed into their hands. The greater number of the officers were interned at Wurzburg, after signing an engagement not to leave the precincts of the town, incite or assist a revolt among the captured privates, or carry on correspondence unknown to the commandant. One of the captured officers was the Prefect of the Ardennes, who had been despatched to Mézières by Gambetta for the purpose of organising the bands of Francs-tireurs of that department. Five of the inhabitants of the town, including the Mayor, were sent to the Prussian fortress of Cosel, on account of having destroyed a railway line. The success was an important one for the Germans, for the possession of the fortress gave them a second line of railway from Metz to Paris—one, moreover, less liable to attack than that running by Nancy, for the protection of which many thousand soldiers were constantly required. The four railways leading to Hirson, Rheims, Givet, and Thionville, meet at Mézières, which is also the focus of numerous roads. Another circumstance which gives importance to the town is that it commands the navigation of the Meuse, which here forms, by a wide curve, a long and narrow peninsula, in the neck of which lies the fortress, the northern and southern sides whereof are flanked by the river. In the winter season, the low-lying meadows on the banks of the Meuse are flooded; and this, of course, adds to the strength of the place, by increasing the difficulty of approach. The suburbs of the town are themselves strongly fortified, and, as a consequence, it detained the Germans a long while. A German artilleryman, describing in a letter to his parents the aspect of Mézières after surrender, remarked that as a soldier he was proud of the effect of the guns, but as a man he cursed and shuddered at the results of war. He had seen Strasburg, and had witnessed much destruction and wretchedness; but the appearance of Mézières surpassed everything else. Scarcely a house was uninjured, and the church was partly shattered. From out of the wrecks of dwellings, the soldiers, as they passed through the abandoned streets, heard the voice of a woman denouncing them as "a rabble." One of the soldiers would have gone up to her, but was restrained. About a third of the town was laid in ruins. In many places the sites of the houses were mere waste, and not a stone of the front walls was left standing. Mr. J. Denistoun Wood, a gentleman connected with the French Peasant Relief Fund at Sedan, visited Mézières two days after the surrender, and, describing the condition of the town, said:—"The narrow streets were so choked up with fallen stones that it was difficult in many cases to get along. Groups of German soldiers were picking their steps over the heaps of rubbish. Some of them had made their way to a cellar, where they had discovered a treasure in the shape of bottles of wine. At one place we saw a number of people looking in, and, upon inquiring the reason, were informed by a German that a cellar had fallen in, and buried five soldiers; whether or not they had been all killed was not known. We made our way to the church, and, as we entered it, trod upon heaps of wheat. Several shells had penetrated the building. One had come through the east window, making a great gap in the stained glass. There were also one or two holes in the roof, through which the sky could be seen. The altar was a mass of ruins." Mézières is the chief town in the first arrondissement of the department of the Ardennes, of which it is the capital. It is a small, straggling place, of barely 6,000 inhabitants, but is strongly fortified, and in 1520 was successfully defended by Bayard, with only 2,000 men, against an Austrian army of 40,000 men. Bombs were first used on that occasion. It was again invested by the Allies after the battle of Waterloo, when a shell was thrown into the north aisle of the church described by Mr. Wood, and has remained sticking

in the roof ever since. The number of civilians killed and wounded in the streets during the last siege was variously stated; but it is certain that several were struck down. Whole families were reduced to living in the cellars, and all quitted the town who could.

The fortress of Rocroy, situated to the north-west of Sedan, was occupied by the Germans on the 5th of January, when 300 prisoners were made, and seventy-two guns, one colour, and many arms, were captured. Large stores of ammunition and provisions were also found. The fort was suddenly surrounded by troops, who demanded its surrender, under threats of bombardment in case of refusal. The commandant, believing that the Germans were unprovided with siege-guns, declined to accede; and the enemy consequently opened fire on the place. The effective garrison of Rocroy consisted of 150 Mobiles and 120 artillerymen and engineers; the guns were old-fashioned, and the fortifications even more so. A dense fog was prevailing at the time the demand for surrender was made, and this concealed the fact that the Germans had fifty-two guns ranged in batteries against the town. An equal number of long-range guns stood in the rear, and from 8,000 to 10,000 men were drawn up against the fortress. On the bombardment opening, the Mobiles rushed towards the ramparts farthest from the fire, climbed over, and fled—many of them towards Givet, the only remaining fortress in that direction. The artillerymen continued their resistance for five hours and a half, though the town was in flames, and 2,000 projectiles had been launched into the place. Very little could be done in reply to this attack, and at half-past five o'clock in the evening another *parlementaire* appeared (an unusual concession, granted on account of the gallant conduct of the defenders), and urged the inutility of further resistance. On this, the commandant consented to capitulate, and the Germans entered, and extinguished the fires. Nearly half of the artillerymen escaped, and the remainder were sent off to Germany. The town was greatly damaged, one-fourth of the houses having been destroyed; but the fortifications were almost untouched.

As these events proceeded, and the fortunes of France grew darker every day, the eyes of some French politicians were turned towards England as a possible ally, even at the eleventh hour; at any rate, it was urged that this country would be acting unwisely, from a selfish as well as a more exalted point of view, in allowing France to be crushed, and Prussia to be raised into the position of the one predominant Power of Europe. Amongst others, M. Michel Chevalier wrote a paper on the subject, in which he pointed out that the naval supremacy of England was threatened by Prussia, and that this was a danger demanding the serious consideration of the St. James's Cabinet. For several years past, Prussia had been exhibiting pretensions of this nature, and, even before the Franco-German war, had fully made up her mind to have a respectable fleet. The design of Count Bismarck being to achieve the domination of Europe, it was probable that, in order to consolidate, fortify, and still further extend this domination, he would endeavour to carry out the political axiom set forth in the words of one of the French poets—"The trident of Neptune is the sceptre of the world." If, argued M. Chevalier, France should be definitively crushed, Prussia, having western Europe at least as much under command as the first Napoleon had in 1810, could do whatever she pleased along that immense seaboard which extends from Cape North in Norway to the Straits of Gibraltar. "Let us suppose that by squeezing Europe, and more particularly conquered France," said the French publicist, "Prussia should have procured the sum necessary to create a fleet equal, or even superior, to that of England at the present day. It is assuredly within the order of things possible, and to be foreseen. Let us suppose that at the same moment England should have difficulties with the United States—which do not love her, and make no secret of it, and which hold suspended over her head the Alabama question as a cause of war, to be made available when they think fit; would the position of England be a very enviable one? Would she have reason to congratulate herself on having, in 1870, held aloof from continental affairs? Would she not bitterly regret having in so cold-blooded a fashion allowed France, her faithful ally of the previous day, to be thus mercilessly crushed?" Many Englishmen believed the invasion of their country an impossibility; but this was assuming too much. With a great deal of money at her command, a bold and ambitious Power like Prussia might in a few years provide herself with a fleet numerically superior to that of England, and equal by the strength and build of the ships. "The times have gone by," continued M. Chevalier, "when, to make a navy formidable, it was necessary to man it by legions of sea-dogs, inured by long practice to navigation, and of whom England had a peculiarly large supply. The steam-ship, which is alone used at present in naval warfare, requires far fewer trained sailors. It demands engineers, of which Germany affords a respectable proportion in her harbours, in her rivers, railways, and workshops; and she would

find a further supply among the natives of those countries that might be chained to Prussia's chariot in the event of the annihilation of the power of France (already boasted of in proclamations) leaving Prussia mistress of the Continent." The Duke of Wellington and Lord Palmerston had both dreaded the invasion of England; though France, not Germany, was the Power whose ambition was feared. An invasion of Britain would be popular in Germany. The Germans are not mere idealists and dreamers, as used to be supposed. They make war in a very practical way, and are fond of plunder. England would afford them a boundless field for indulging their taste for booty. All these calamities would become possible for England, if France, down-trodden, mutilated, and bled to exhaustion by Prussia, were reduced to the rank of a subordinate State. Forecasting the terrible results of a German descent on our coasts, M. Chevalier exclaimed :—

"England would then learn by experience that of which she now seems to be ignorant, in spite of authentic narratives; she would become practically acquainted with the mode in which the Prussians carry on war—with the respect they show for international law and humanity. She would be taught that bitter lesson by the bombs showered down upon her open towns if they made a show of resistance; she would be taught it by her burning villages, scientifically fired with petroleum, for having harboured volunteers or militiamen whom the Prussian Staff did not choose to acknowledge as belligerents; she would be taught that bitter lesson from her outraged maids and matrons—by the repetition of the crime of Bazeilles in every one of her counties—from her judges, her most eminent citizens, tied down on a locomotive engine next the stoker—from her merchants and manufacturers snatched from their homes, and sent to Germany as a guarantee for the release of Prussian merchant sailors at sea, upwards of 1,000 miles from their residence. Finally, she would learn that bitter lesson through war contributions, crushing requisitions, the ruin and the desolation which would mark every bivouac of the invading army. In the hypothesis of the destruction of the power of France (the only first-class ally England can have), England has to anticipate the disastrous and humiliating contingencies to which we have referred—the *modus operandi* of the Cabinet of Berlin, now fully ascertained. This makes it a duty for her to prepare for the worst."

In another article, M. Chevalier undertook to show that a counterpart of the Treaty of Tilsit in 1807 was concluded after Sedan between Count Bismarck and the Russian Government, and that, to secure the adhesion of the Czar, the Federal Chancellor had given his assent to the designs of Russia on Constantinople. Europe had a vital interest in preventing this monstrous alliance, and, if done at all, it must be done at once. Bismarck's plan rested upon the consummation of his project for the annihilation of the power of France. Prince Frederick Charles, said M. Chevalier, had made a solemn declaration to that effect, and the persistency of King William in continuing the war proved only too conclusively that this was the real object of Prussia. If the power of France were destroyed, the corner-stone of the political edifice designed by Count Bismarck would be put in its place. Continental Europe would be under the yoke; England would be made a subordinate Power, and threatened in more ways than one. On the contrary, if the greatness of France survived, there was no possible foundation for the conception of the Prussian statesman. The Continental States would escape servitude, and England would be saved from degradation. It could not be for the interest of England, with her vast Indian Empire, that Constantinople should be in the hands of an unscrupulous and enterprising Power like Russia. If France were crushed, Great Britain would have no ally against such designs. Though insular in her situation, Great Britain was too near the Continent to permit of her detaching herself altogether from Continental affairs; and her greatest safety would be in having a European policy—a policy far-seeing, honourable, firm, and courageous.

Such were the views of this eminent French author. They made no impression on the British Government, which maintained to the last its position of entire neutrality towards the two belligerents; but amongst certain classes of Englishmen many persons were to be found who thought an effort should be made to avert the fate of France, and to prevent the rise of Prussia into a Power of gigantic and menacing proportions. During the month of January several demonstrations of sympathy with the former country were got up in London by the working classes, by politicians favourable to Republican forms of Government, and by more moderate Liberals. One of these meetings was held in the great hall of the City Terminus Hotel, Cannon Street, on the 5th of January, 1871. The speakers included Dr. Mackay, Sir Henry Hoare, M.P., Dr. Kenealy, Q.C., Mr. Sidney Smith, and others of less distinction. Together with a great deal of wild and excited oratory, some sensible remarks were made; and it was resolved that a public meeting of the inhabitants of the whole metropolis, under the presidency of some eminent statesman, should be convened without delay, and that a deputation should be appointed to wait on Mr. Gladstone with the following memorial :—

"The war now waged between Prussia and France shows no indication of coming to a speedy close, whilst the destruction of life and property, and the miseries of every kind it is causing, necessitate that prompt and energetic steps be taken for the purpose of bringing it to an end. As Englishmen, we can honestly say that we do not regard either of these nations with hostility, or even with prejudice. We feel that the contest they are engaged in is injurious principally to themselves; that, in victory or defeat, loss and suffering will lie heavily on them both; and therefore, in their common interest, we are anxious that councils of peace should prevail, and that the horrors of war should cease. But, beyond the ordinary results of war, which, on grounds of humanity, we deprecate and deplore, there are other considerations which we feel ought to be taken into account by those to whose hands the government of our country is entrusted. As a manufacturing and commercial people, our interests are bound up in the well-being and well-doing of our neighbours; and we cannot but believe that, when two great nations with whom we carry on an extensive trade use their energies and resources for purposes of war, the effect upon our industrial position must be injurious in many ways. On grounds, therefore, of humanity and self-interest, as well as of sound international policy, we, citizens of London, desire a peace—equitable, immediate, and permanent. To promote such a peace is one of the most important duties an influential Government can undertake; and as one of the most enlightened and powerful Governments in Europe, we call on her Majesty's Ministers to take an active and earnest initiative in this good work."

At another meeting, of a more democratic character, held on the same evening in Old Street, London, the war was denounced as a war of aggression on the part of Prussia ever since the interview at Ferrières between M. Jules Favre and Count Bismarck; and a resolution was carried, setting forth that the meeting protested "against the pro-Prussian tendencies of the present Government, as illustrated by the haste with which the English representative congratulated King William on the probability of his assumption of the German Imperial dignity, and the tardiness which at present has prevented England from following the example of America in its recognition of the *de facto* Republic of France." Meetings were also held at St. James's Hall and other places; but the movement never acquired that force which alone influences Governments, and induces them to change their policy. It was seen with respect to many of the agitators that their desire was more to support the French Republic than France itself, and that they regarded the war rather as a fight between two forms of government, of which one had their sympathy and the other their detestation, than as a desolating struggle between two peoples, each of which could show some grounds of justification for its attitude, while neither was blameless, and both had abundant reasons for seeking a fair and peaceful close to the dispute. That the war feeling in France, and the national jealousy of Prussia, had been encouraged by none more than by the Republican party, was an inconvenient fact which these one-sided reasoners took good care to conceal; but it was not forgotten by the English people generally, and it had an influence in determining the course of this country with regard to the contest. Nevertheless, although there was no widely-spread desire to go to war on behalf of the French, a feeling of deep commiseration for that people was universal; and the manifest determination of Prussia to wring the utmost out of her reeling and gasping adversary caused many to look with distrust upon a Power now advancing to something like the dictatorship of Europe.

In France itself, some hope of English interposition was excited at the time when the colliers were sunk in the Seine. It was argued that England must needs go to war with Prussia after such an incident, and that she would be glad to conclude an alliance with the French Republic. When, however, it was discovered that the British Government was satisfied with the explanations and the proffered indemnity of Prussia, the momentary gleam of hope faded away, and nothing remained but the prospect of utter failure and rapidly approaching humiliation. It is noticeable that both France and Germany reproached us for want of sympathy—the fate of neutrals in every quarrel. The *Journal des Débats* gave expression to the French view of the case, when it said:—"Assuredly we are not so simple as to pretend that England owed us her assistance to any extent or in any shape in the senseless war into which the Government of France blindly rushed; but neither was she called upon to display in such an offensive and brutal manner the joy with which our misfortunes inspired her." And on another occasion the same paper remarked:—"The truth is, that the English are a practical people, and that their policy consists in making use of nations as long as they are worth working, and in letting them alone when they fall. In political as in private matters, they turn their back on the man who has failed. The lucky capitalist cuts the speculator who has met with misfortune. The pacific and philosophical portion of the English Cabinet, with the Prime Minister at its head, limits the sphere of its action principally to internal policy. The English must be taken as they are, and they themselves wish to be so taken. If they have no need



THE PRUSSIANS AT THE BRIDGE OF ST. DENIS.



SITTING OF THE FRENCH COUNCIL OF WAR.

of France, they will leave her on one side; if they *have* need of her, they will do her service; it will be on their own account, and not on hers. They know but one thing in business—success. They are not obliged to pay our debts; if we have done a bad business, so much the worse for us. This is the reason why France should rely on herself, and on herself alone." Arguments such as these expressed the feeling towards England commonly prevailing in France during the last few weeks of the struggle.

The German case was presented with great force and point by Baron Speck von Sternburg in a letter to an English friend. The baron did not affirm that the export of arms from England to France was clearly contrary to international law; he admitted that it might be covered by that law; but he argued that the German people could not help feeling aggrieved when they found the English, for the sake of profit, supplying the French with those weapons by which alone the latter were enabled to carry on the war. He then proceeded :—

"Suppose you are attacked on the highway. After a terrible struggle, you get your antagonist's bludgeon from him, when a bystander steps up and supplies him with a fresh cudgel for a shilling, and so helps him to fight you over again. Though that bystander proves to you that he bears you no ill-will whatever, and is merely following his lawful trade as a dealer in cudgels, you will nevertheless have no love or respect for him. You are quite certain that he has either been moved by sympathy for your antagonist, or by the shilling. In either case, philosopher though you may be, you will not be able to suppress feelings of dislike or contempt. If these individual emotions cannot under such circumstances be controlled, much less can those of large masses of people be subjected to the guidance of logical reasoning, or the mere reference to the code of international law. If you will supply belligerents with arms, as you may have every right to do, you must take the ill-will of the injured side into the bargain. Above all, you ought to consider the exceptional character of this contest. We Germans are fighting to ward off and subdue an enemy who has attacked us treacherously, and with the avowed purpose of disuniting and despoiling us, and to destroy our growth and prosperity as a nation; and we are doing this, not with conscripts or paid soldiers, but with the sacrifice of ourselves, of our sons, of the fathers of our families, gone forth from their own hearths to lay down their lives for the freedom and safety of their country. A nation so situated may well be susceptible. We call upon you, home-loving English, to put yourselves in our place. If your souls were harrowed like ours by the loss of your dear ones falling on foreign soil, under the fire of an enemy's guns, what would your feelings be towards him who supplied those guns? True, money, coals, horses, and other war material, may be as destructive in the end as the actual weapons of war; but the people at large of any nation will take no philosophic views as to that. Human nature prompts them to enmity towards him who supplied the very instrument with which the deadly blow is dealt. The other lookers-on at this contest, America excepted, seem to be impressed by these considerations. Belgium, the principal seat for the manufacture of arms, has strictly guarded against their export to France. Even Spain has done so. We owe to those countries the tribute of our respect for their neutrality, not only in the letter, but in the spirit. As to America, if the export of arms from that country to France has really occurred in any considerable quantity, it is certain that American arms have so far not been taken from the French in anything near the quantity of the English arms taken."

The comparison with regard to the ruffian on the highway and the dealer in bludgeons is not quite exact, though very natural from the German point of view. In the case supposed, the desperado making the attack would be clearly and indisputably acting contrary to law, and the man who should supply him with a fresh bludgeon would be equally guilty of an illegal act, the circumstance of his being a dealer in bludgeons giving him no sort of warrant to abet an attempt at robbery and murder. As to this there cannot be a shadow of doubt, or the possibility of contention. But the right or wrong of any war is a mere matter of opinion. The Germans of course had the most profound conviction that the right in this particular war was on their side; the French (apart from sectional wranglings as between Empire and Republic) were equally persuaded that it was on *theirs*. Of the independent lookers-on, some stood by one combatant, some by the other, as they had an unquestionable right to do. Whatever the faults of France, it cannot be granted that Germany was so absolutely blameless in the matter as to be entitled to go about demanding that *her* view of the quarrel should be universally adopted as the plain law and justice of the case. Still, it is easy to understand and difficult to blame the feeling of exasperation in Germany at finding England, while professing neutrality, engaged in a trade which helped one belligerent against the other. It has previously been shown in this work (Vol. I., pp. 51–2) that the exportation of contraband of war is generally held to be not contrary to international law; but we have a municipal law by which the exportation of arms may be prohibited, and this was never set in force by the English Government. Here was the strong point in the German case against England; and it is not surprising that the Germans should have accused us of being willing to aid their enemies to the utmost of our power. The time must come

when the State, if it determine on neutrality, must enforce that determination on individual citizens, and not permit a war of privateering to be carried on under the cloak of trade. By neglecting this obvious rule of sense and morals, with respect first to America and then to Germany, we established between ourselves and the two greatest Powers of the world relations that were fraught with difficulty and peril.

In the midst of all these divergences of opinion, one common feeling grew stronger every day—the desire for peace. Even in Germany, people were getting sick of the war. The more independent thinkers condemned the extortionate demands of Prussia; and a number of German residents in France sent a memorial to the Emperor William, taxing him with ambition, and with a desire to trample out the life of the French people. The rage of conquest had been gorged, and the revulsion of satiety was fast coming on.

CHAPTER XI.

Position of General Chanzy at Le Mans—State of his Army—Action at Sougé—Determination of Prince Frederick Charles to advance—His Plan of Battle—The Germans pressing forward—Their Movements opposed by the French—Sharp Fighting—An Engagement in a Fog—State of the French and German Armies—Severe Weather—The German Advance on Le Mans—Progress of Prince Frederick Charles—Tragical Incidents—Position of the French and Germans on January 9th—Fighting on the 10th—Skirmishing in the Pine Woods—Battle at Changé—A Night Bivouac—Situation on the Morning of the 11th—Desperate Fighting of Prince Frederick Charles's Army before Le Mans—Gallant Exploit—The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg's Operations near Connerré—Voluntary Prisoners—State of the Ground on the 12th—Renewed Fighting on that Day—Retreat of Chanzy's Army—Taking of Le Mans, and Fighting in the Streets—German and French Losses—Remarks on Chanzy's Generalship—Disorderly Flight of the French, and Pursuit by the Germans—Change in the Character of the German Soldiery—Gambetta and Chanzy.

GENERAL CHANZY, on gaining Le Mans on the 21st of December, after the tremendous series of actions which he had fought during the first three weeks of the month, set himself to work to reorganise his army, shattered and dispirited by incessant struggling, and by the fatigues of a forced retreat. Several of the men were in a pitiable condition—ragged, barefoot, ill-fed, and almost mutinous. Others, indeed, presented a more soldierly appearance; and it is certain that an army which had for so long held the Prussians at bay must have contained some good material. But all needed repose, and the severity of the weather was not favourable to military operations in the field. In the closing days of the year, the camp at Conlie was broken up by order of M. Gambetta, and the armed troops were sent to increase the forces of General Chanzy, while the rest were dispersed in other directions. From the 21st to the 31st of December, a few engagements between advanced detachments of the French and German armies took place; the most important of which was one occurring on the 27th at the little village of Sougé, situated on the banks of a small stream called the Braye, near its confluence with the Loir. It appears that on Christmas Day some Francs-tireurs, or possibly some armed villagers from Sougé and a neighbouring hamlet, fired on the cavalry patrols of the Germans. General von Kratz accordingly ordered a detachment of the troops under his command to march on the following day against Sougé and its fellow offender. On the 26th, a small column left Vendôme, headed by Lieutenant-Colonel von Boltenstern, and, following out its instructions, rested that night at Montoire. The expedition pursued its course on the 27th, the main body going forward, while half a company stayed behind, to hold the road and protect a small bridge leading over the river. The way was pronounced clear by the Uhlans, and there was as yet nothing to indicate the probability of serious opposition. On approaching a little village called Troo, however, the advanced guard was fired upon from the shelter of houses and walled gardens. This checked the Prussian advance for a while; but the colonel had been ordered to go to Sougé, and he resolved not to turn back. A fight of two hours' duration ensued, and at length the French were driven out, and the German column, leaving a company in Troo to hold the place, resumed its march. "Sougé," said the *Times* correspondent, describing the incident, "was soon in sight, but was found to be occupied by the enemy, prepared to defend it. On the height to the right above the Braye were seen three dark lines—each a French battalion; and the presence of artillery with them was soon equally manifest. Still the colonel was undaunted, and re-

turned fire for fire. The combat was waxing warm, when the attention of the German officer was drawn to a new danger gathering in his rear: the heights by which he had lately passed were becoming crowded by Frenchmen, whose object was to cut off his retreat. Foes in front, foes in rear, there was no chance left but that of cutting his way back to Vendôme as best he might. He fell back swiftly through Troo, picking up as he went the company he had left there, and endeavoured to reach Montoire before the enemy could overwhelm him. The men marched fast, and had well-nigh gained the wished-for shelter, where also some of their comrades had been left in the morning, when suddenly a row of armed men appeared right in front, blocking up the road, and stretching right across the valley from hills to river. The enemy's infantry rushed after him through Troo, where he had now not a friend, and the guns he had resisted before thundered behind him, sending shells among his men; more guns crowned the heights on the left rear; rifle-bullets from the infantry in front whistled through the air; many a spiked helmet sank from its place; on the right rolled the icy waters of the Loir, bridgeless until that line in front could be passed." The only way of saving the force from total destruction was to divide and scatter it. This was done, and the infantry, separated from the cavalry and the guns, rushed furiously upon the enemy. "The line that barred their passage," continued the *Times* writer, "hesitated, wavered, and broke; too soon for success, too late for safety. There was no time to count killed and wounded, nor the prisoners whom the Germans took, and drove before them as they went. The barrier was down, and Montoire was gained. Even then the way home was not clear, because the main road led through Les Roches, where a detachment had been left; but the road was blocked by two French battalions with artillery, and the half company had been driven back long before. The enemy's guns still sent shells from behind and from the heights on the left, and infantry was coming up the road firing upon the rear of the Germans. Steadily their colonel called his men to him; steadily they gathered and trimmed their ranks; and steadily they crossed to the left bank of the river, carrying their prisoners, uncounted as yet, with them. For some time the hostile infantry pursued along the road; then all was quiet, and the Germans marched through the twilight and the darkness, always driving their herd of prisoners, until they got back according to order, and the colonel reported himself at Vendôme about an hour before midnight." The losses of the column were about 100 men; but, of unwounded French prisoners, the Prussian force had secured ten officers and 230 men.

The affair was an exceedingly gallant one on the part of the Germans, and General Kratz, in his report, said that all had done their duty. The column had marched from morning till eleven o'clock at night, and had fought from noon till nearly five in the evening against an enemy so superior in numbers that it was believed a whole division was present. But it was clear that the French also had fought well, and that they were in strong force in the direction of Sougé. The Germans had hoped to conduct one of their old easy expeditions against villages, in which the fighting was confined to the interchange of a few shots, and the business ended in the burning of houses with petroleum, the slaughter of a number of wretched peasants who might or might not have been concerned in the alleged firing on patrols, and the turning adrift into the fields of all the women, old men, and children in the place. These things had been frequently done in the earlier days of the war, and General Kratz had committed the mistake of thinking they could still be performed. A large, and on the whole not contemptible, army had sprung up in this part of France, and the ways were no longer open to a small column intent on making an example of patriotic hamlets. It was evident that more hard fighting was at hand, and it became necessary to prepare against it. The departure of General Bourbaki from Bourges towards the east rendered this all the more easy.

Before the close of 1870, news had reached the head-quarters of Prince Frederick Charles, at Orleans, that the peasantry were greatly excited by the expectation of fresh movements on the part of the French commander, to be shortly commenced. It was therefore resolved by the German Prince to abandon his purely watchful attitude, and to go forth and meet the enemy, so as to frustrate any design that might be entertained by Chanzy of leading a new expedition towards Paris. Orders were issued from the Prince's head-quarters for a gradual concentration towards Vendôme, lying to the south-west of Orleans. The movement began on the 1st of January, 1871, and on that and the two following days the roads were covered with masses of troops. Blois, Vendôme, and the country between, forming the advanced positions towards the Loir (the reader must again bear in mind the distinction between this stream and the neighbouring river Loire), were occupied by the Tenth German Corps. The troops of von der Tann were stationed near Orleans, while the city itself was held by the

Ninth Corps, with detachments before it, higher up the Loire. These various bodies were to advance by different roads, to drive the French out of Vendôme, next to attack Chanzy at Le Mans, to take that place, and to destroy the Army of the West. A part of the German army was to be directed against Chanzy's right at La Chartre (a little place on the Loir, totally distinct from Chartres, to the north-east, where the head-quarters of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg were situated), to do its utmost to turn the position there, and then to join the other corps in the main battle before Le Mans. At the same time, the Duke of Mecklenburg was to drive in the French left. The two attacks were to be at nearly right angles to one another—the Prince approaching from the south-east, the Grand Duke from the north-east; thus compelling Chanzy to present two fronts to his adversaries. Other dispositions were made for strengthening the line of battle of Prince Frederick Charles, for maintaining the communications of the several divisions, and for protecting the army from any possible attack from the north.

These arrangements being concluded, Prince Frederick Charles moved his head-quarters to Beaugency on the 4th of January, and on the following day advanced to Oucques. The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, who had stayed behind for a little while at Chartres, now advanced southwards to Illiers. On the 6th, Prince Frederick Charles marched from Oucques to Vendôme. After a time, his progress was met by a very stubborn opposition on the part of the French. Just beyond Vendôme, and in front of the forest, the advancing columns were seriously engaged with the enemy. The *Times* correspondent says the Germans were taken by surprise, not expecting opposition in that locality. The Prince, he states, "arrived about mid-day, and, hearing the sounds of battle apparently close at hand, climbed the steep path leading to the old castle, just high enough to be able to scan the valley of the Loir and catch the puffs of smoke which decked the summits of the hills on the further side of the valley. Straight in front, the road to St. Calais climbed the nearest, or almost the nearest, elevation to its right; on the top of the hill was a wood (the Forest of Vendôme) and a Prussian division of the Third Corps was pressing up the road. It had already met with some opposition, but had won its way forward step by step. It passed by a white house half way up the hill, and soon the whole wood became fringed with smoke, as the French disputed their ground manfully. The Germans had marched all day, and were fatigued; but they fought not only for themselves, but to help the Tenth Corps, which had been checked in its advance across the Loir that morning, and subjected to a flank attack at St. Amand." The French fought well, but the Germans were not stopped in their advance; and their opponents were at length obliged to retreat before the scathing fire directed against them. At the same time the Eighteenth Division reached Morée, on the Loir, north of Vendôme, and to the right of the German line; while, on the left, Duke William of Mecklenburg (who is not to be confounded with the Grand Duke) was checked by considerable bodies of French near Villeporcher. General Hartmann was therefore sent with a cavalry division and a brigade of infantry from the Tenth Corps in the direction of St. Amand, which compelled the French in that quarter to fall back towards Tours, whence they were transported by railway to Le Mans. The Germans then occupied St. Amand and several other positions; but the French still retained Villeporcher, and they themselves stated, in their despatches to Bordeaux, that they subsequently retook all their positions, and entered St. Amand during the night, the Prussians retreating towards Vendôme. This seems to have been substantially true. On the same day (the 6th) the Grand Duke marched with the Seventeenth Division to Brou, and the Twenty-second advanced to La Loupe and La Forche. The French were giving a good deal of trouble; but, on the whole, their line continued to recede.

A thaw set in on the 7th. Rain fell heavily all day; the whole country was converted into a swamp, so that the artillery could not be employed; and a thick mist enveloped both armies, concealing their movements from one another. The Germans knew that the French could not be far off, and they marched with redoubled caution. After a time, a few horsemen who had ridden to the front came trotting back to the head of the advancing column of infantry, and reported men on the road. The infantry advanced slowly, straining their eyes to discover, if possible, the nature of the obstruction. The fog deepened, shutting out the view of everything ahead; then grew lighter, dimly revealing a number of figures, and above them the appearance of bayonets. For a moment it was doubtful whether these troops were Frenchmen, or a small reconnoitring party of Germans who had pushed a little too much in advance. The order was at once given, "Cuirassiers to the front!" The horsemen immediately got ready, and soon filed past the infantry into the grey waste ahead. "The fog comes down again," said a military correspondent of the *Times*, who accompanied the

march, "and the dim figures with the spikes become once more invisible, but not unheard. The horses are hardly in their stride, and have not gone more than half the four hundred or five hundred yards up-hill in the direction given to the riders, when a crackling noise is heard, and the air becomes filled with a whizzing sound as of innumerable heavy insects flying faster than insect ever flew before. Every horseman bends to his saddle-bow. The officer who leads them is seen to wave his sword, and heard to give a word of command. The Cuirassiers, who went at a trot, return at a gallop, but always steadily and in order, followed by those swift hornets with the fierce stings. Like magic, the foremost infantry soldiers dissolve, but not to retreat. They spring to the sides of the road into the ditch, full of half-melted ice, into the fields, and begin in their turn to creep forward. The enemy is still in the mist, though near at hand, and, as the hornets come thickly and fast, the squadron of cavalry now occupying the front place seems inclined to follow the example of the infantry, and dive for shelter. But such is not their part in battle, and one simple 'No,' in an expostulatory tone, from their commander, recalls them to their steady attitude." The officer, however, soon afterwards withdrew them into a field. The infantry men continued to work steadily forward, firing at the flashes of the enemy's rifles, and adding to the obscurity by the smoke of their discharges. At half-past twelve o'clock the sun made a strong effort to break through the fog. The fight was now partly transferred to the fields, and the trees were constantly struck by the bullets. More venomous and deadly grew the firing every moment, and the combatants approached one another. Then, with a loud shout, the Prussians rushed forward, and carried the enemy's position by storm. It proved to be nothing more than a parapet and trench thrown up across the road; but it cost the Prussians a few lives to take it.



BEFORE THE SORTIE.

The correspondent who recorded the incidents of this action remarked that the only fear afterwards was lest General Chanzy should retire too quickly, and carry out the words found in the letter of a French soldier—"The Prussians won't get another Sedan, for, at any rate, our legs won't fail us." The event, however, proved that the army of General Chanzy fought again, as it had fought in December, with courage and persistency. Of the German army



RETREAT OF CHANZY'S ARMY.

the *Times* writer said:—"I came here (Vendôme) expecting to see an army looking overworked, and officers somewhat spoilt by too much success. I find troops of large stature, well fed, bright, and, it may almost be said, rosy; the finest cavalry horses I have ever seen, and in such condition that they might all have been turned out of an English gentleman's hunting-stud; and the tone of the Staff officers, which sets the fashion for the rest of the army, is curiously, I had almost said studiously, modest. For instance, when I mentioned the extraordinary efficiency of the train and the discipline of the drivers, the answer—a very true one—was, 'Yes, but hitherto the fortune of war has always enabled us to advance. The time of trial will come if we are obliged to retreat.'" By nightfall, the Fifth and Sixth Divisions had reached the line of the Braye at Savigny and Sougé, and the Eighteenth was at Epinay. The Seventeenth Division was at Authon, and the Twenty-second at Nogent-le-Rotrou; and the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg moved his head-quarters to Beaumont-les-Autels. The frost set in again on the 8th of January. Prince Frederick Charles now moved his head-quarters to St. Calais. The Fifth and Sixth Divisions were in front of him, on each side of the high road, and the Eighteenth Division was just behind Illiers. The Tenth Corps, which had been temporarily detained on the 6th before the Forest of Vendôme by the energetic opposition of the French, had by this time arrived at La Chartre, on the Loir, on their way to Le Mans. A detachment of six squadrons of cavalry, one battalion of infantry, and six guns, was formed, and placed under the command of General Schmidt, in order to connect La Chartre with St. Calais; and on the same day the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg reached La Ferté St. Bernard with the whole of his infantry corps. Various cavalry corps kept up the communications, and the German advance pressed closer and closer on the retreating French.

The little episode of thaw which had occurred on the 7th was over almost as soon as begun. On the 8th, the ways were once more hard; but the ice with which they were covered impeded the progress of the cavalry, and in this respect the condition of the roads was worse than that which existed when the rain was pouring down, and the mists were rising from the low lands and shallow streams. Snow was falling heavily as the Head-Quarter Staff left St. Calais on the morning of the 8th, and, although this melted as the day wore on, the ice remained, and proved very troublesome. The officers, finding it impossible to ride their horses, dismounted and led the beasts, which incessantly slipped and stumbled, uttering piteous groans. "By the side of the road, and sometimes in the middle," said the *Times* correspondent with Prince Frederick Charles, "poured on that everlasting stream of wagons conveying supplies to the troops in front. Many a horse fell, but was soon pulled on his legs again, without shouting, and with business-like rapidity. Now and then a regiment was passed, halting on the road, and, from it arose a shout of welcome to their Prince and leader, who walked the whole distance (about twelve English miles) with the ease of a sportsman. There were occasional halts, when a report would come in, telling the progress made by a division on the right or left. At a road-side inn, called La Grande Halte, a short stay was made to await a messenger, and again when the firing of infantry was heard not far off on the right. Still the snow fell, and lay half melted on the ground. Every man was covered with wet snow half an inch thick, which clung fast to cloaks, coats, and capotes." Now and again the cavalry halted by the side of the road to feed their horses, and the men could be heard laughing and singing, as if the discomfort of the weather made no difference to them. At times the band played lively airs; and in this way the fatigues and depressing influences of the march were to a great extent neutralised. Nevertheless, tragical incidents would occur. One day an adjutant was examining a party of French prisoners in order to ascertain what information they could give of the strength and movements of the opposing army, when one of the men suddenly snatched a rifle from the hands of a Prussian soldier, and shot the adjutant; upon which the Germans, in a fit of uncontrollable rage at such an act of treachery, fell on the prisoners, and slew several of them. Another day a Uhlan was found lying in the mud by the roadside, with his head cut off, and his body stabbed in numerous places. During the 8th, the French were attacked at Château Renault, and driven out of the village of Authon; but they assert that they retained their other positions in the same direction. A heavy snow-fall on the 9th somewhat delayed the advance of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg; on the evening of that day, Prince Frederick Charles and his Staff arrived at the little town of Bouloire, where head-quarters were temporarily fixed. The 9th did not pass entirely without fighting; but nothing of importance occurred. The powers of endurance of the German soldier were severely tested on this and other occasions. About a month earlier, the Ninth Corps, it is reported, marched some fifty-four English miles in four-and-twenty hours; and twenty-five miles a day, for infantry, cavalry, and

artillery, were not unusual. The regimental officers shared the hardships of the men; and even the officers of the Staff had a great deal of anxious work to get through, in the way of arranging reports, taking the orders of the Commander-in-chief, indicating the roads by which the columns were to march, digesting all information received as to the movements of the enemy, and conveying instructions to the subordinate generals.

Before this steady pressure the French continued to recede, though for the most part not by the road along which Prince Frederick Charles advanced, but by way of Tressor. The German army was now drawing close to Le Mans. The forces under the command of the Prince and of the Duke of Mecklenburg are said by some writers to have numbered only 85,000 men, though the French set them down at 180,000. The probability is that the real number was between the two extremes. All the men were in admirable condition, and served with an excellent commissariat. The Germans, and correspondents in their interest, alleged that the horses were in an equally efficient state; but the *Daily News* correspondent at Bordeaux told a different story. He wrote:—"I have seen a despatch from General Chanzy, in which he says that all the horses of the Prussian cavalry captured by him are in a pitiable condition, and that his prisoners say they were often obliged to dismount and lead their horses, which were unable to carry them. The general said, in these very words:—'I have a weakness for horses, and tears came into my eyes when I saw the state of these poor animals.' This account is by no means surprising, when we remember that, owing to the prolonged drought, the hay and oat harvest in France of 1870 was the worst known for many a long year. No doubt the far-seeing Prussian Commissariat has done all that was humanly possible to provide forage for the horses of the army; but no severity in making 'requisitions' can produce corn and hay which do not exist." The French army to which the Germans were now opposed has been variously estimated at 118,000, 160,000, and 200,000 men. The highest of those numbers was officially put forth, about a week earlier, in telegrams from Bordeaux; but the lowest figure is most likely to be the truth. The two armies seem to have been about equally matched as regards numbers; or, if the French were in this respect superior to their antagonists, it was but slightly so. In all other matters, and those the most important, their inferiority to the Germans was marked. Still, the army of General Chanzy had shown that it possessed fighting capabilities, and its commander was clearly a man of decision and talent. On the morning of the 10th of January, the French were drawn up on a series of wooded heights, which had previously been fortified—a position strong both by Nature and Art. The soldiers were armed with American breech-loading rifles, which have been described as far surpassing the needle-gun; while their artillery included a number of Gatling mitrailleuses, also of American origin, firing a heavier projectile than the terrible weapon, of French manufacture, used in the earlier days of the war.

The serious fighting began on the 10th. On that day the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg was checked in his march by resistance offered by the French close to the town of Connerré. Prince Frederick Charles, however, had got well forward, and he now ordered the Third Corps, consisting of Brandenburgers, to press on as far as possible towards Le Mans, so as to prevent the French from re-forming their legions. The Eighteenth Division of the Ninth Corps was instructed to the same effect. General Alvensleben, in command of the Third Corps, finding the main roads so coated with ice as to present great difficulties, directed three of his brigades to advance by as many tracks through the forest, and to meet at night at Changé. A fourth was to march forward by the high road as far as Champigné. The last of these brigades (the 12th) pursued its way along the road, clearing the country of lurking French soldiers. Several skirmishes, of a nature rather vexatious than dangerous, occurred in the woods. Near Champigné, however, the brigade was assailed by a terrific fire from the Gatling gun, throwing bullets of huge dimensions, and of proportionate weight, from revolving barrels. The force of these projectiles is such that they would pass through a dozen human bodies without being stopped. Nevertheless, Champigné was taken by the Germans, and the French were compelled to withdraw. Of the three brigades that were to proceed by the forest-tracks, the 9th, under Colonel Couta, made its way through thick pine-woods until, near Challes, it encountered the enemy. The French were soon thrust back, and were presently taken in the rear by General Schwerin, of the 10th Brigade, who, hearing the sound of firing at Challes, and perceiving by his map that there was a road leading round by the back of the French position, at once assumed the responsibility of endeavouring to cut off the retreat of the force opposed to his comrades. He therefore placed himself beyond Parigné, in the way of the flying enemy, and captured the whole body, together with two mitrailleuses. Parigné itself fell into the hands of the Germans, being unable to

resist so sudden an attack from behind; but it was subsequently re-occupied by the French.

The 11th Brigade also encountered fighting in the pine-woods. Its infantry included the 20th and 35th Regiments, consisting to a considerable extent of men drawn from Berlin. The march continued without opposition the greater part of the day; but, towards evening, bullets and shrapnel began to whiz through the air. The front of the column immediately broke up into skirmishers, who dashed out into the fields on both sides of the road, ran swiftly from hedge to hedge, and crouched down to shoot. Presently the guns turned into a field, and fired a round each, in reply to the French artillery, but then ceased, the enemy not being visible. The head of the Prussian brigade pressed on, and shortly discovered the French in a little hamlet. Quickly concentrating their scattered ranks, the Germans rushed upon the place with a loud hurrah. The French, who up to that moment had fought coolly and courageously, gave way when the struggle came to close quarters. Throwing down their arms, they cried for mercy, and were marched to the rear as prisoners. The most desperate fighting of the day was at Changé, where a portion of the French forces occupied the houses at the outskirts of the town, while other portions defended a series of natural wet ditches, now covered with ice. The men of the 11th Brigade had to withstand a fierce rifle and shrapnel fire; hundreds fell on both sides, and Changé was still untaken when darkness closed in. Suddenly, firing was heard to the left of the Prussians, and General Schwerin, with the 10th Brigade, proceeding from Parigné after his dashing exploit there, now made a flank attack on Changé. The French still fought savagely for some time longer, first in the streets, and then in the houses; but all was in vain. The Germans had possession of the place, and the French were ultimately captured, and shut up in the church of the little town. The action of the 10th is designated by the Germans the battle of Changé.

The bivouac-fire that night was described by the *Times* correspondent with the army of Prince Frederick Charles, who wrote:—

"A little straw was piled on the snow, and lighted; then a few sticks, and at last great faggots of wood. The officers sat on a long faggot opposite the blaze, stretching out their wet feet to the genial warmth, and clouds of steam soon arose from the dripping group. The men extended the fire further and further in length, and stood around it, obedient as ever to the word of their commander—a lieutenant. Snow began to fall thickly, and turned to golden or rosy flakes as it drifted past the light of the bivouac-fire. Some brandy was produced, and grog made English fashion—spirit first, hot water after. The scene was strangely picturesque: the long fire, fed occasionally by whole faggots of wood; the officers at one end sitting in their great coats, with small pannikins of grog; the patient men arranged down on either side of the fire, trying to get some warmth out of it; rosy steam rising from the group, crossed diagonally by thickly-drifting, silent snow-flakes; and, a little further off, seen through the steam and the snow, another bivouac-fire, with mingled German soldiers and French prisoners standing round it—the Germans broad-faced, broad-chested, ruddy, and cheerful—the French slight, generally thin, frequently boyish-looking, and always depressed. A horse's head grew out of the mist close to the officers, and then a rider in cloak and spiked helmet. He was seeking information as to what road he should take to carry a message, and could only remain long enough to mention many names well known to the officers present. Colonel —— dead; Captain —— severely wounded, shot through the chest; gentlemen with whom we had all, perhaps, been talking at four o'clock that afternoon, now gone for ever, and so suddenly. There were many sighs and exclamations of sorrow, and then deep curses, because such valuable lives have to be sacrificed to no purpose."

It was far into the night before the tired Germans were able to obtain shelter in the houses of Changé.

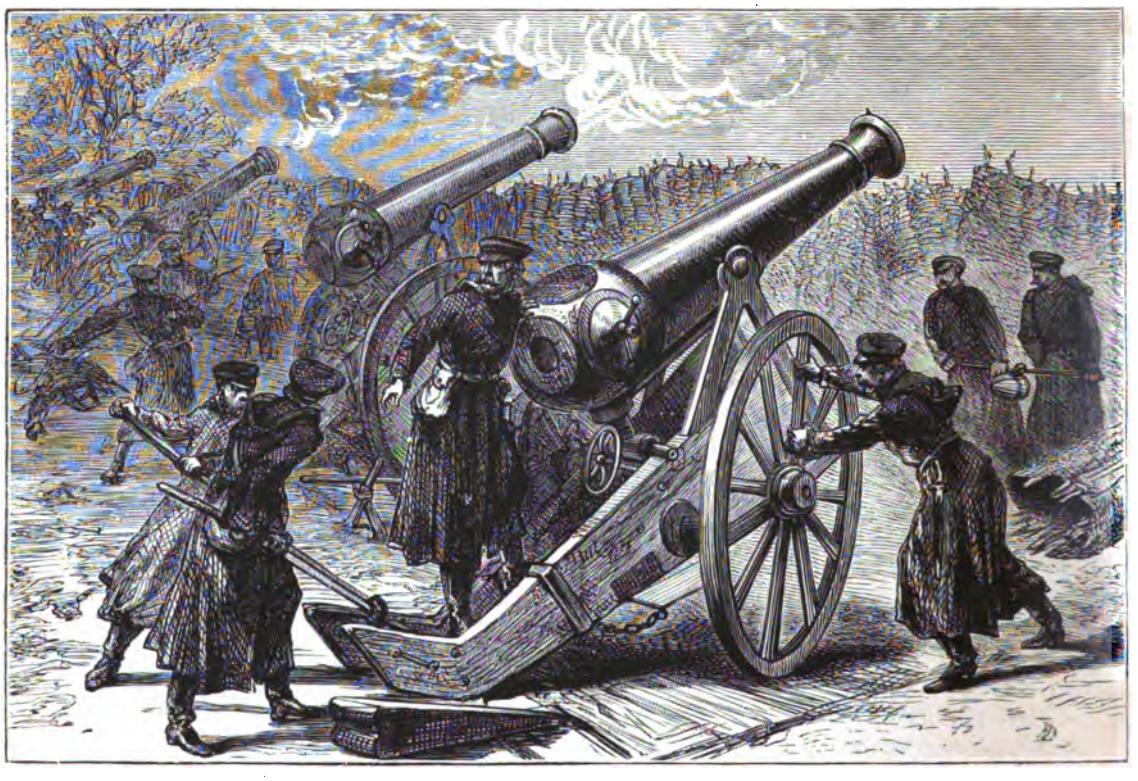
The situation on the morning of the 11th was such that, had the French army been at all equal to the German, it would certainly have proved victorious. Chanzy's troops were posted on a curving amphitheatre of hills in front of Le Mans, with the river Huisne running at the bottom; all the bridges over this river were held by them; and on the heights they had planted an extraordinary number of guns and mitrailleuses side by side. Prince Frederick Charles had only three divisions with which to go into action against the French; for the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg had not yet arrived, as expected, and the Tenth Corps, which had been delayed by the opposition of the French near Vendôme on the 6th, was not, by this time, farther advanced than Mulsanne and Ruaudin, on the south-westerly road to Le Mans. Had Chanzy been aware of the small force then at the disposal of the German commander, he might have attacked at a great advantage to himself. "The French," said the Military Correspondent of the *Times*, "were in force, and ought to have advanced, sweeping away the small number of Germans opposed to them. But they were contented with holding the position. On this, as on other occasions, the Germans multiplied their numbers by audacity and quickness. They ran from hedge to hedge, and from tree to

tree, never exposing themselves unnecessarily, yet always ready for a charge and hurrah when a chance presented itself." The French fire, however, was tremendous. Chassepôts, mitrailleuses, and Gatlings vied with each other in the deadly rain which they poured forth, and the Germans lost men in large numbers. The Eighteenth Division was ordered to attack the range of hills above Champigné, and shortly afterwards a French battery began to bombard the town with shrapnel. The fight in this quarter continued till nightfall, and ended in the Germans carrying the heights in question. At the same time, the Third Corps (Alvensleben's) was sent against another range of heights in the direction of Le Mans. A terrific struggle here went on for some hours, but the French maintained their positions. They are said to have had 50,000 men at this one point, stationed on a vast natural rampart, which could only be approached over ground covered with woods, lanes, ditches, and banks. The Germans were far inferior to the French in numbers; but they rushed against the heights with dauntless courage. Still, they made little progress, and Alvensleben, whose head-quarters were established in a little house filled with wounded (a *café* at Changé), looked anxious, and towards the close of the day expressed himself dissatisfied. His men, however, seem to have done the utmost that was possible under the circumstances. The 10th Brigade was despatched in a northerly direction, in the hope of gaining the road to Le Mans by Savigné. The 11th, in marching on Château-les-Noyers, was met with such a tempest of fire from the French batteries on the hill opposite Château-les-Arches that it was compelled to give way; and the 12th, which had been ordered to attack Yvré, was recalled, and sent to its assistance. The French were then driven back, but it was afterwards found impossible to hold the position against the fearful artillery fire that was brought against it.

The attack on the heights above Champigné was attended by some noteworthy incidents. "The Prince himself," said the *Times* correspondent, "was at St. Hubert, and ordered the attack to be made, he moving near to watch it. A road from St. Hubert leads towards the right to Champigné, at the foot of the heights nearest to the advancing Prussians. One brigade remained at St. Hubert. About four battalions marched along the main road towards Yvré, which lies in the rear of the heights and the river; nearly the same force took a road through the woods leading to the village of Champigné. The former force, spreading out into company columns, covered by skirmishers, went at the heights in front, with its left towards the river, and took the hills before it in gallant style. The other four battalions, or three with some Jägers, pushed through Champigné, and moved steadily at the flank of the hill. One battalion remained below in reserve; one company mounted the hill, upwards, onwards, strongly driving the enemy before them, over one elevation, down into the ravine, up again, always onwards, striving to gain the flank of the French, and assist their struggling friends who were attacking the hills in front. But on the last crest stood three mitrailleuses snarling defiance, and causing even the Germans to recoil. The small force lay down to save themselves as well as they could. An eye-witness relates that when the company rose afterwards it was short of thirteen men. The rest of the brigade cleared the back of the heights." This battery was taken in a very gallant fashion by Captain Mauntz, of the 11th Infantry. He chose a small body of picked men, and approached the battery by a secret movement through a ravine, enabling the party to burst suddenly on the gunners with a wild hurrah, before which the French fled in dismay. Unfortunately, the captain was wounded shortly afterwards, either by a Prussian battery which opened on his company by mistake, or by the French. He was conveyed to a house in a little neighbouring hamlet, and was lying quietly there when the place was re-occupied by the French, who held it throughout the night. "They would have carried him off, to sigh for liberty in vain," said the *Times* correspondent, "but a woman, who had seen his gentleness to the French wounded, caused him to lie on her bed, and represented to her countrymen that his wound was dangerous, so that they also pitied him, and let him lie. Night came, and the faithful few whom he had led so well consulted how they might rescue their captain. They moved silently out in the darkness, and crept unperceived into the village where the wearied French were taking their rest after the battle, to renew the strength so needful for the morrow's work. The Prussian *Kinder* knew where their father lay, and stole quietly into the house with a stretcher which they had brought. 'Here, Captain, now is your time.' They set him on the canvas, and, seizing the poles with vigorous arms, slipped out as they had come, unperceived." The wound was not dangerous, and the captain had the satisfaction of proving at once the courage and the attachment of his men.

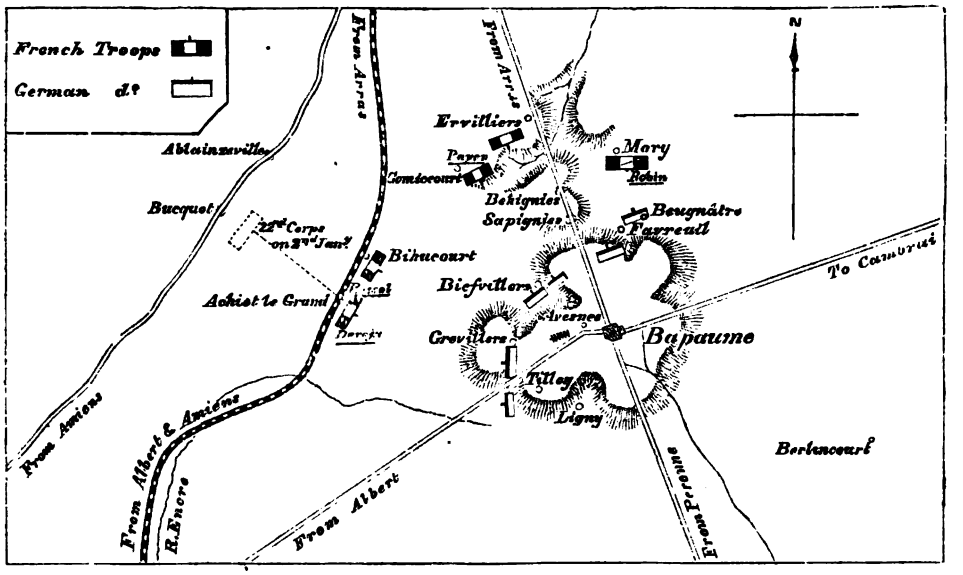
While these actions were going on, the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg was fighting a separate battle in the neighbourhood of Connerré, to the right of Prince Frederick Charles. In the early morning of

the 11th, the troops of the Grand Duke were drawn up, for a distance of more than three miles, on the high road leading to Le Mans, which runs along a ridge skirting the left bank of the Huisne, and commanding a wide view over the valley, portions whereof were at that time flooded by the overflowing river, or rather converted into ice-fields, out of which rose the scattered ranks of poplars here and there. The opposite hills, in possession of the French, were densely wooded with birch, pine, and other trees; and the intervening ground was divided by hedges, and traversed by a line of rail. At the commencement of the day, it appeared as if Chanzy were massing his troops on the right of the Duke of Mecklenburg's army, in the hope of turning it, and so getting on the road to Paris. The design, if it was ever entertained, was frustrated by the advance of a portion of Prince Albrecht's cavalry on Savigné, and by a simultaneous movement of the Twenty-second Division, under General Wittich, which was ordered to cross the river a couple of miles in the rear of Connerré, and to operate between the main body of the army and the cavalry division forming the extreme right wing. These dispositions threatened the French left with the danger of being outflanked, and in the meanwhile Prince Frederick Charles, as we have just seen, was far advanced along the road to Le Mans, so that the left of the Grand Duke's line was placed beyond peril. Opposite the heights of Montfort-le-Rotrou, where the French were strongly posted, a sharp rifle engagement went on for some hours. The Twenty-first French Division, commanded by General Rousseau, was to a great extent concealed by the thick woods which line the sides of the ascent; but the Germans carried one position after another, driving the French before them, and taking several prisoners. The final charge was executed by the Twenty-second Division of Mecklenburgers, who at length succeeded in forcing the enemy into the snowy fields, where they afforded a good mark for the German artillery. Though they were now at a distance of 3,000 yards from the guns, shells were thrown among them with fatal precision. In a little while, all the positions occupied by the French in the morning were in the hands of the Germans, and between three and four o'clock in the afternoon the former were in full retreat.



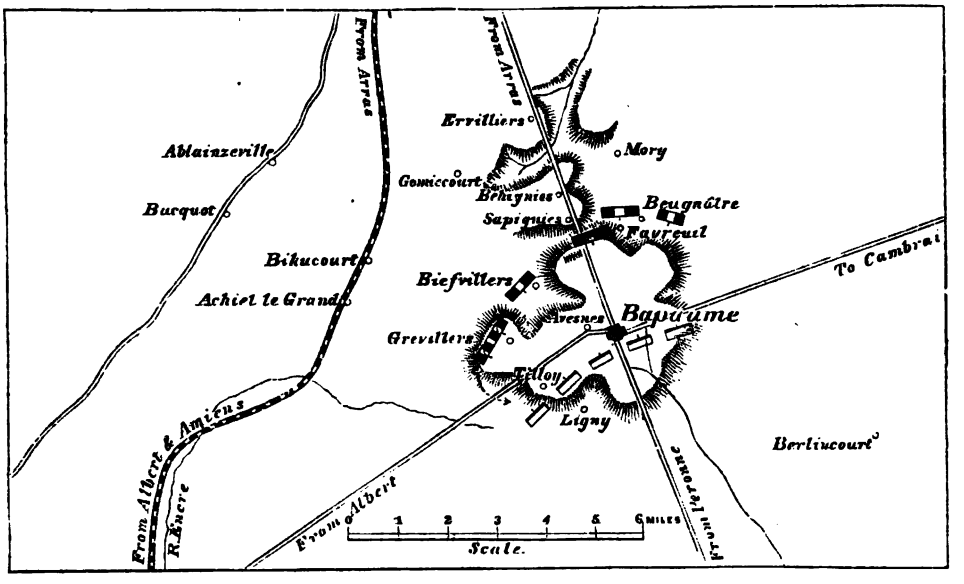
GERMAN BATTERY BEFORE PARIS.

By-and-by, long files of miserable-looking prisoners came sweeping past; and it is said that many of these had given themselves up with evident



BATTLE OF BAPAUME, JANUARY 3RD (No. 1).

The French attack Grevillers and Biefvillers on the right, occupy Behignies and Sapignies unopposed, and seize Favreuil and Beugnâtre.



BATTLE OF BAPAUME, JANUARY 3RD (No. 2).

The French repulse an attempt to turn their right and gain possession of Tilloy. The Prussians, holding Ligny, retire behind Bapaume.

willingness, being glad to escape a further participation in the perils and hardships of war. "Very rarely," wrote the *Times* correspondent with the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, "is one to be found who tells you he volunteered for the war. Generally he produces a voluble supply of reasons to convince you why he would have been a fool had he done so; and he bitterly inveighs against the Government which dragged him from the bosom of his family, who are even now wondering what has become of him, and weeping over his probable fate. He entertains the most profound distrust of every French officer, from the general at the head of his army to the captain at the head of his company. Moreover, he abounds in complaints of the hardships to which he is exposed, and of the

mismanagement of which he is the victim; and it never seems to occur to him that some blame may possibly rest with the man who, like himself, can openly repudiate the notion of volunteering to fight for his country, and who, when he is forced to do so, takes the first opportunity of deserting the cause which, in spite of the sufferings it involves, should be deemed sacred." One of the prisoners, according to the same authority, went into ecstasies of joy at finding himself a prisoner, laughing immoderately, and shaking hands with the German soldiers, as if they were his dearest friends. These disgraceful scenes occurred chiefly with the Mobiles; and it is said that the irregulars were never to be found among the dead during the present series of actions, the privilege of flight or surrender being always resorted to. It is to be suspected, however, that there is some exaggeration in these statements. In several parts of France, the Mobiles fought better than the Line.

General Chanzy's account of the fighting on the 11th was as follows:—

"We have had to-day a battle at Le Mans. The enemy attacked us along our whole line. Admiral Jauréguiberry firmly maintained his position on the right bank of the Huisne. General Colomb for six hours stubbornly contested the plateau of Anvours. General Gaugard displayed great energy. The troops from Brittany materially contributed to the preservation of the important position below Changé.

"General Jouffroy, despite the fatigue of his division and the efforts of the enemy, maintained his position. The Roquetaine division did not allow the enemy to cut the road to Parigné. We sleep to-night in all our former positions, with the exception of that at Tuillerie, which fell during the night; but dispositions have been made for the re-capture of that position. We have captured some prisoners, but I do not at present know their number. All of them estimate the forces opposed to us, or in reserve, at 180,000 men, and add that Frederick Charles is before us, who had not left for the east. The battle only ended with the night. Our losses are considerable; two colonels are wounded. Those of the enemy are cruel. A fresh attack is expected to-morrow."

The Grand Duke continued his advance on the 12th, and came upon many signs showing the severity of the previous day's fight. The Germans were astonished at the want of capacity displayed by the French in not having successfully defended so excellent a position. The country was thickly covered with underwood, and traversed by deep, narrow lanes, which might easily have been blockaded; while numerous banks and ditches gave frequent opportunities for lying in ambush. The snow-covered fields were dotted all over with the dead bodies of troops of the Line, and the white expanse was marked in several directions with the traces of fugitives, looking, says the writer already quoted, like innumerable hare-tracks on a large scale—tracks sometimes terminating in a pool of blood, where a wounded man had fallen, sometimes in a stiffened corpse. Chassepôts, great-coats, and knapsacks, thrown away in flight, were frequently to be seen; and occasionally a dead horse lay heavily on the ground, though rarely, as the French seem on this occasion to have employed neither artillery nor cavalry. Along the road from Connerré, the ground was strewn with provisions, and a collection of abandoned commissariat stores was piled under a sign-post. The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg now moved his head-quarters to Montfort-le-Rotrou. His Seventeenth Division was at Corneille, his Twenty-second at La Croix; and the Fourth Cavalry Division was eastwards of Ballon.

Renewed fighting occurred on the 12th; but it was undertaken by Chanzy only to cover his retreat. In the morning of that day, the French commander telegraphed from Le Mans to Bordeaux:—"Our positions were good last night, excepting at La Tuillerie, where the Mobiles of Brittany disbanded themselves, thereby causing the abandonment of the positions we occupied on the right bank of the Huisne. Vice-Admiral Jauréguiberry and the other generals think a retreat is necessary under these circumstances. I resign myself to it very unwillingly." As the day advanced, it was perceived by the Germans that the French had begun to retire, and that their guns had almost disappeared from the hills. At five in the evening, Chanzy sent a message to Bordeaux, saying:—"I have commenced the movement of retreat, which I am organising in such a way as to occupy a new line, in order to re-form the army and recommence operations." It is reported that Chanzy had received strict orders to carry off his guns in any case, and this appears to have hampered his movements. To prevent the Germans, however, from molesting his retreat, he directed an attack on Les Noyers, which for a time created some anxiety among his adversaries, exhausted by the losses of the previous day, and not very clearly informed as to the position and intentions of the French. Chanzy might, indeed, have done much more on the 12th than he did. There was a period during that day, according to the Military Correspondent of the *Times*, when the whole of the Eighteenth Division had been sent to help the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, except two companies—the only force then holding the main road. The French, however,

did not know the weakness of their enemy in that direction, and the Prussians were not seriously disturbed. The attack on Les Noyers was repulsed. The Sixth Division, forming part of Prince Frederick Charles's army, took Yvré with but little fighting, and, mounting to the plateau, cut off the retreat of the French in that quarter. The Tenth Corps (which, as we have seen, was detained the day before by the bad state of the roads) now got forward, and, being joined by General Schmidt's detachment, encountered the French at Château de la Paillerie. Driving the enemy before them, they reached the heights before Le Mans, and threw some shells into the town, and on to the retreating columns of Chanzy's army. The Fifth Division followed shortly afterwards, and finally Le Mans was occupied by the Germans. The French were not entirely out of it as the new-comers entered, and some further fighting ensued. The *Staats Anzeiger*, describing the scene, said :—

"There was fighting in the streets between our troops, and stragglers and fugitives of General Chanzy's army. Our troops were fired on from the houses and from ambuscades of all kinds, not only by French soldiers, but even more so by groups of men in blouses, who posted themselves at the street corners, armed with rifles, with which they tried to prevent the entry of our battalions. The retreat of the French army had been carried out with desperate haste. Till just before the arrival of our troops, train after train had been despatched from the station in order to take away only the soldiers—not the ammunition and provision wagons, or the officers' equipage. These latter were drawn-up in line in the streets, just ready for departure, when shots in the suburbs announced the arrival of the Germans. A panic thereupon broke out among the column, which left it entirely in our hands. Every wagon wanted to go forward in breathless haste, and they thus got into utter confusion. The drivers whipped the horses, the latter reared and plunged, one wagon threatened to run over another, cries filled the streets, and the column tried to make a move forward, till our soldiers came up and ordered 'halt.' This being disregarded in the desperate confusion which prevailed, a few bullets brought the mass to a stand, and the whole train fell into our hands. That evening and the following days, the wagons covered the streets, and even extended beyond the town. The horses had freed themselves, and wandered about; and on the snow lay letter-bags, boots, uniforms, mitrailleuses, cartridges, and chests of biscuits, in the most picturesque confusion. The ammunition-wagons were open, and the grenades were taken by anybody who passed. The stores at the railway station were still larger, and for our immediate wants much more serviceable. These were packed in goods trucks, and seemed just about to be despatched when our soldiers laid hands on them. There were entire trucks full of straw and hay, oats, flour, coffee, sugar, rice, brandy, with boots and uniforms. Two hundred railway carriages and six locomotives were also taken by us. Le Mans was in this respect a second Saargemund. Together with a great portion of the equipage of the retiring army, important official papers of General Chanzy's were captured, which afforded interesting information as to the operations and organisation of the army. They plainly showed that the retreat was decided upon after the engagement on the 10th, was then re-considered, and resistance to the utmost resolved upon. By reading between the lines, it is evident that there was no great hope of victory. Chanzy frequently complains of the want of zeal and support which his plans received from the other generals."

The Prussians arrived at Le Mans about dusk on the evening of the 12th, and the officers of the Tenth Corps afterwards reported that they had lost at least one hundred men in the streets. It is also affirmed that the French on this occasion used explosive bullets, which, on striking the walls of houses or the bayonets of the conquering troops, exploded with a report and a bluish flash. But the resistance, however desperate, was now in vain. The French army of the West was utterly and hopelessly beaten, and Le Mans had no choice but to submit to the fortune of war. General Chanzy was much dissatisfied with the conduct of some of his troops; and, in an order of the day received at Bordeaux on the 15th of January, he said :—

"After the fortunate issue of the fight in the valley of the Huisne and on the river Loire as far as Vendôme, and after having successfully resisted, on the 11th of January, before Le Mans, the main attack of the enemy's forces, commenced by the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg and Prince Frederick Charles, some shameful cowardice and an unaccountable panic caused a certain portion of our troops to abandon important positions, compromising the safety of all. An energetic effort was not attempted, notwithstanding the orders to that effect immediately given, and it was necessary to evacuate Le Mans. France has her eye on the Second Army. No hesitation is allowed. The season is severe; fatigue and great privations are always with us; but the country suffers, and, when one supreme effort can save it, no one will hesitate. Know well also that safety is in resistance, and not in retreat. The enemy will appear on our positions. You must receive him vigorously, and fight. Rally round your chiefs, and prove that you are the soldiers of Coulmiers, Villepoir, Josnes, and Vendôme."

The total German loss in killed and wounded, during the engagements from the 6th of January to the 12th, inclusive, was stated by the Prussians themselves at 177 officers and 3,203 rank and file. The French, no doubt, suffered still more severely, and, beside the killed and injured, nearly 22,000 prisoners were taken, if we may credit German

accounts. The number appears incredible, seeing that there was no capitulation in mass, as at Sedan, Metz, and some other places; and it has been stated on the French side that the Prussians were in the habit of exaggerating the sum-total of their captures. Yet it is certain that the number of prisoners taken during this second campaign of General Chanzy was very great; and that in two or three places large bodies of men gave themselves up with eager readiness, alleging that they had not been supported by some movement they had been led to expect, or that there had been a mistake as to orders, or some other equally transparent excuse. Nineteen guns, including mitrailleuses, also fell into the hands of the conquerors, together with smaller arms, ammunition, and war material. On the 13th, Prince Frederick Charles, who had held his head-quarters during the two previous days at Château Ardenay, moved into Le Mans. The people, now that the struggle was over, received the victors quietly, and after a little while even with courtesy. The more amiable side of the French character was developed in proportion as the impossibility of further defiance became more and more manifest; and the good-humour of the shop-keepers, and of the population generally, was probably as much attributable to innate kindliness as to fear of consequences.

Chanzy had done the most that could be expected of him, commanding as he did an army containing many worthless materials, as well, it must be admitted, as others which proved that they were not devoid of military virtues. "In these operations of the French commander," said a critic in the *Times*, "there is little, we think, to censure. The general of Arcola and Lodi might possibly have seized one or two occasions on which an attack would have been successful; but even this is extremely doubtful, and Chanzy displayed great skill in choosing his positions at Le Mans. The movements of his foes were terribly effective, but they cannot be cited as military precedents; and the Grand Duke, especially, displayed less than the wonted circumspection of the German commanders. In fact, however, the Germans felt that they could do nearly as they liked; and the result could never have been doubtful." The troops, when they found all chance of success at an end, took to flight in the most undisguised manner, moving towards the north and west. That which had been a tolerably compact army a few days before, now frayed out into a number of ragged shreds of regiments, into fragments of companies, into scattered mobs of men who no longer acknowledged any authority or command, or into individual fugitives, each seeking for his own safety and following his own path. A writer from Laval, where the beaten army stayed for a time, said that the troops were "demoralised" to an incredible degree, and that the French cavalry were employed in scouring the villages and farmhouses of the Mobiles and National Guards who had hidden themselves there "by thousands," and whom the horsemen found it necessary to drive along the roads by smiting them with the flats of their swords.

All this while, the pursuit by the Germans continued with great vigour. The Grand Duke moved towards Alençon on the 13th of January. The Eighteenth Division occupied the entrenched camp at Conlie, previously vacated by the French; and two days later a combat took place on the farther side of that town, the French having made an attempt to recover the large quantities of munitions of war left in the camp. The Germans became exasperated by this prolongation of a war which they characterised as hopeless, and therefore entirely devoid of justification. Even the Military Correspondent of the *Times*, with all his Prussian sympathies, noted a change in the conduct of the invaders. "It is not war," he wrote, "but a series of massacres. The French cannot win now; they are suffering terribly, and the Germans are becoming fiercer from day to day, and not only so, but, as a German officer expressed it, they are growing a little wild. The severity of their trials, the constant slaughter, and the increasing feeling of superiority, try the discipline of the army to an extent which renders it difficult to keep up the high tone of moral feeling and complete obedience to law which characterised them when first they entered France. It has become necessary for the Prince to issue an order calling on the men to show themselves as good soldiers in moderation after victory as they have done in achieving success. Acts of plunder will be visited with severe penalties, even that of death. German soldiers are but human, and the prolongation of their sojourn in a conquered country, far from the influences of home, together with the constant presence of death, have a tendency to harm their characters by rendering them callous to human suffering. It is impossible not to see a gradual change coming over the German troops, and there is danger lest honourable war should grow into bitter personal hatred, and the men who rose up in enthusiasm to defend their country begin to look on war as a trade by which they hope to have personal gains. Until now, this tendency has been kept under by the example of the officers and the habit of strict obedience; but the order of the Prince does not come a day too

soon to remind the army of the difference between public and private quarrels." Every allowance must be made for the feelings and actions of men circumstanced as the Germans then were; yet, with regard to the French, it should be observed that every nation has the right to determine for itself the extent to which it will carry on its resistance to an invader—especially to one who pursues his operations in a ruthless fashion, and avows, as his main object an intention of despoiling the national territory. The French may have acted unwisely for their own sakes in continuing the struggle so long; but to charge this against them as a crime, for which they might justly be punished, even in excess of the unavoidable sufferings of war, is preposterous.

The roads, as the Germans pushed on, were found covered with thrown-away weapons, ammunition, cartridges, biscuits, coffee, &c. At Alençon, the Prefecture was stored with military accoutrements, all abandoned, and in every direction were signs of utter discomfiture. M. Gambetta, however, soon announced that General Chanzy had reorganised his army, and was again marching forward. But in truth he was hopelessly beaten, and he himself had the magnanimity to disavow the extravagant praises of the Minister of War, who was never satisfied unless he was in excess of the facts.

CHAPTER XII.

The Resistance at Alençon—A Theatrical Prefect—Prussian Fines and Requisitions—Temporary Rally of Chanzy at Laval—Movement of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg towards the North—Skirmishing on the Road—Sad Incident—Arrival of the Grand Duke's Forces at Rouen—Junction with the Army of General von Göben—German Military Arrangements—The War becoming unpopular in France—Number of German Troops on French Soil—Supply of Food, &c., to the Invading Armies—Letter of the Count de Chambord on the Siege of Paris—Legitimist Criticism—Prince Napoleon and General Changarnier—The Law of Vengeance—Capitulation of Longwy—History of that Fortress—Effects of the German Fire—State of the Town after Capture—Distress in various Parts of France—The Peasant Farmers' Seed Fund—Statements of Mr. Bullock and of Miss Cross—Famine Fever—Report of Colonel Loyd-Lindsay—A French Protestant Association—Seizure of a French Telegraph Cable.

THE resistance to the Prussians offered by the town of Alençon was not very serious; but it produced some unpleasant consequences. The Prefect, it appears, had been nominated to his post only about ten days before the arrival of the Germans. He was a member of the extreme Republican party, and had been a coadjutor with Rochefort, Flourens, and others, in the conduct of the *Marseillaise*, a Paris journal of an exceedingly "Red" hue. The Mayor and Municipality were in favour of a policy of compromise, should the enemy appear before their undefended town. But M. Antonin Dubost, the new Prefect, was determined on offering an armed resistance to the invaders. He accordingly endeavoured to excite the population by frantic appeals to their patriotism, and told the demurring members of the Town Council that he had authority and power to shoot them if they persisted in opposing his views. The Mayor of Alençon, however, was so popular with his fellow-townsmen that they sided with him; and it is said that M. Dubost was himself in some danger of being executed. The Prussians were now close at hand, and the Prefect managed to send out a body of about 7,000 men, with six pieces of artillery, under the command of a Pole named Lipowski. A fight ensued late on the 16th, in which the Germans lost six men killed and wounded. While the skirmish was going on, a shell broke the windows of the Prefecture, and scattered its fragments about one of the rooms. M. Dubost immediately snatched up a jagged piece, rushed with it to the public Place, and, addressing the multitude, exclaimed (according to the *Times* correspondent):—"Why do you tremble, foolish citizens of Alençon, at the sound of cannon? I hold in my hand the fragment of a harmless shell which has burst in the Prefecture, and left me untouched. Be brave as I am, and fear not the fragments of shells, even though they burst near you. Defend your town to the last extremity." He then disappeared, and was not again heard of by the people of Alençon. The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, not caring to force his way into the town that evening, at the cost of a great deal of bloodshed, gave the French the option of retiring during the night; and of this they took advantage. The Germans entered without any further opposition on the following day, and, as a punishment for the previous resistance, imposed on the town a fine of 300,000 francs, besides a large contribution of cattle, corn, coffee, chocolate, tobacco, &c.

On the road between Le Mans and Alençon the

French had dug a large number of deep ditches, flanked by earthworks and barricades, with a view to obstructing the progress of the Prussians. A passage was left across the middle of the ditch, wide enough for a carriage to pass singly. For this also the Germans determined to inflict a penalty. They therefore issued a proclamation informing the people of the department that for every one of these obstacles they would have to pay 5,000 francs, and that another sum of equal amount would be levied if the road were not repaired within four-and-twenty hours. It does not appear that the French attempted to defend one of these barricades, which did not cause any serious delay to the Prussians. But, as a means of increasing the burdens of the unfortunate provincial populations, and of augmenting the money gains of the conquerors, they were not without effect. The Mayor of Alençon was obliged to meet all these liabilities, which, had his views prevailed, would never have been incurred. The people of the town were strongly anti-Republican, and, at the time the Prussians arrived there, were disposed to bring the war to a conclusion. Repeated defeats and accumulated requisitions had left them no heart for further fighting.



M. ROCHEFORT.

General Chanzy succeeded in bringing at least a portion of his army to a temporary stand at Laval. At midnight on the 15th of January, he telegraphed to Bordeaux that the heads of the enemy's columns had appeared that evening on the roads abutting on the French positions, that an engagement had taken place between the Prussian advanced guard and the Algerian Éclaireurs, and that the combat was afterwards continued on a larger scale. The Twenty-first Corps, he stated, fought well until night, and made prisoners, one of whom was a chief of battalion. The Sixteenth Corps sustained a desperate struggle. Admiral Jauréguiberry had his horse killed under him, and the chief of his Staff was slain at his side. The other troops seem to have fought less well, and the centre, in particular, lost ground. The resistance of the French, however, was sufficiently determined to delay the progress of the Germans in that direction. A Bordeaux telegram of January 20th said that the Prussian manœuvres against Chanzy appeared to manifest a plan of driving the French army into the department of La Manche, by Mayenne and the Alençon road, towards Cherbourg. With this object, it was added, the Germans had made strenuous efforts to turn Chanzy's right, under Generals Jouffroy and Curten; but the attempt had been defeated by Chanzy's tactics. The real object of the Germans was simply to pursue the retreating French wherever they could find them, and to break up the already shattered Army of the West into still smaller and more ineffectual fragments. Two columns were sent forward in a northerly direction, under the command of the Grand Duke, while Prince Frederick Charles operated to the west. On the 21st, the forces of the Grand Duke were at Broglie, in the department of the Eure, after having marched twenty miles that day along roads wet and muddy from melting snow, and in the midst of a steaming fog. The arrangements by which the troops were housed at night were these:—In order to receive reports and give fresh orders, a point was fixed, generally at the meeting of cross-roads, where about mid-day the executive officers of the different battalions met the Commander-in-Chief. They were then for the first time informed in what village each corps was to pass the night, and what were the orders for the morrow. The progress of the two columns was not diversified by many incidents. Occasionally there would be a skirmish with a few Francs-tireurs,



ON THE MOVE.

and on the 21st of January a detachment sent in the direction of Orbec met with some resistance at a barricade; but a couple of shells dislodged the defenders, who fled in confusion, and the town was occupied by the Germans, without loss. On the same day another detachment of the Grand Duke's force arrived at Broglie, of which the *Times* special correspondent with the Duke of Mecklenburg's army wrote:—"The château of Broglie, surrounded by its English-like park, and commanding a view of the picturesque old town and surrounding country, may be known to many an English reader, who may have partaken of the hospitality of its noble owner; and those whose duties lead them in the wake of armies as neutrals may on such a day as this find themselves brought into the keenest sympathy with both. With the courage and nobleness of character of a true French gentleman, the Duke of Broglie has remained at his post, endeavouring by his presence to mitigate to the inhabitants the inconveniences of a hostile invasion, while he is fulfilling the painful duties of host to the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg and his Staff. To those who may have known the family under happier auspices, there is something inexpressibly distressing in coming in hostile guise to demand by right of conquest what would have been gladly offered under the rites of hospitality." One of the most painful incidents of the expedition was the death of Count Yrsch, of the Grand Duke's Staff, who, while delivering a message to General Bredow, was shot from behind a hedge by a Franc-tireur, and expired almost instantaneously. He had for some time been attached to the Bavarian Legation in London, and had only joined the army a few days before. A religious ceremony was performed over his remains in the old church of Broglie, on which occasion the Order of the Iron Cross, which he had greatly coveted, was pinned upon his breast.

Bernay, a town still farther north, was taken at an early hour on the morning of January 22nd by a squadron of cavalry and the 12th Company of the 90th Regiment, who suddenly came on a retreating body of French, and so startled them that they left behind five field-pieces, which they made no attempt to defend or to carry off. Still, as the Prussians advanced, the enemy retreated before them. Brionne was evacuated by the French before the invading columns arrived there, and, on the 24th, the Prussian Éclaireurs returned from the front, and reported that they had been in communication with the advanced posts of General Bentheim's division of the Northern Army near Bourgtheroulde. On the 26th, the whole body of the Grand Duke's forces arrived at Rouen, thus forming a junction with the legions of General von Göben, which had just succeeded in defeating the army of General Faidherbe in the action (already described) before St. Quentin. In the meanwhile, Prince Frederick Charles had been equally fortunate in dispersing the other portion of Chanzy's army to the west of Le Mans; and this portion of France was now no longer capable of offering the least resistance to the invaders.

The correspondent with the Grand Duke, from whose letters quotations have before been made, gave some interesting particulars of the discipline of the army when writing from Brionne on January 24th. He said:—

"The splendid appearance of the men after two months of incessant campaigning, the perfect precision with which all the divisional arrangements are made, both in regard to time and the order of march, gives the mid-day rendezvous, especially when it happens in a town, almost the appearance of a review. As the soldiers marched past General von Treskow to-day, with their bands playing, it was difficult to believe that they were in the middle of a long day's march, and that since the 10th of last November they have only had four days' rest. Upon every other day they have been either fighting or marching, and have been engaged on sixteen separate occasions with the enemy. The 75th, 76th, 89th, and other corps of which it is composed, are recruited entirely in Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Strelitz, and the Hanseatic towns. The whole of this service was seen under the command of General von Treskow, who was only appointed to the division in the early part of November. Both he and the Grand Duke have just received from the King of Würtemburg the highest grade of the Order of Merit. It is only by thus actually marching with a division that one gets to understand the *modus operandi* of the German Army in the campaign. The all-important hour of the day is the hour of rendezvous. Then may be seen adjutants and sergeant-majors, each with pencil and pocket-book, standing in a half circle, like boys in a class, and writing down their orders by dictation, as it is given them by the general's aide-de-camp; and here, too, may be seen the general of division, surrounded by the generals of brigade, colonels of regiments, and superior officers of the division, in some field or open space apart, making them a speech on matters of discipline, or other topics affecting the well-being of his command."

The armies opposed to this splendid military machine were in every way incapable of coping with it. It is impossible not to admire their courage and patriotism in making the attempt; but the game was now clearly hopeless. The French themselves, for the most part, began to admit the unwelcome fact, and the desire for peace became stronger with each successive day. When a long file of French prisoners, ragged, weary, and de-

pressed, was passing through Le Mans shortly after the German victory in front of that town, a woman sobbed out, "Oh, they have taken our whole army!" "The best thing they could do," responded another; "if we had no more armies, there would be no more war." The people of Brittany were exceeding displeased with M. Gambetta's appeal to the country generally to pay in a lump the taxes for the ensuing year, which it was usual to require only in monthly instalments. They protested that they would not contribute a centime, until they were actually compelled, to the prosecution of a war which, in their view, was being continued only in order to build up a Republic.* The Bretons are for the most part Legitimist in their political opinions, and highly Papistical in their religion; so that the demagogism and secular leanings of M. Gambetta filled them with horror. A correspondent of the *Daily News*, in going by railway to Rennes, heard a soldier in the train say, "That Gambetta's the cause of all this useless loss of life." "Yes," said another, "he thinks he will get off when it becomes too hot for him; but he should not if I were anywhere near him." A proposal to sing the "Marseillaise" was received with groans and hisses, and the Republic was almost everywhere denounced. Yet, only three weeks before, M. Gambetta, in a despatch to M. Jules Favre, had said that the chances of French success in the war were getting greater every day; that the spirit of Paris had been breathed upon France, which had thus been transfigured; that public spirit was completely for war; and that France was becoming more and more attached to the Republican system.

The German forces on French soil at this period were stated by a Berlin paper at 591 battalions, with 575,100 men; 424 cavalry squadrons, with 66,300 men; 280 batteries, with 74,100 men and 1,680 guns; and 12,600 engineers: making a total of 728,000 men. The effective strength at the beginning of the year was about 510,000 men, and many reserves were then being sent to the scene of war. These forces occupied, not partially, but completely, thirty-two out of the eighty-six French departments, in which they exercised all civil and military powers, controlled the posts, telegraphs, and railways, and regularly collected the taxes. The feeding of this enormous host was a work of great difficulty, requiring the utmost exercise of administrative skill. The several armies were, indeed, to some extent supported by the country through which they passed, or wherein they temporarily settled down; but this only partially supplied their needs. Sometimes it failed them altogether, as at Orleans, which, though situated in a peculiarly rich district, yielded scarcely anything to either men or horses. The Berlin correspondent of the *Times* gave some calculations as to the requirements of a single army corps. In the space of twenty-four hours, each army corps consumed 18,000 loaves, weighing three pounds each; 120 cwt. of rice or pearl-barley; 70 oxen, or 120 cwt. of bacon; 18 cwt. of salt; 30 cwt. of coffee; 12 cwt. of oats; 3 cwt. of hay; 3,500 quarts of spirits, and 3,500 ounces of orange essence, or some other bitter tincture, taken with the spirits; to which must be added 60 cwt. of tobacco, 1,100,000 ordinary cigars, and 50,000 officers' cigars, for every ten days. These figures were to be multiplied by twenty-four or twenty-five, to give the sum-total of the consumption of a single day, or, as regards tobacco, of ten days, of all the German troops then in France. The despatch of warm winter clothing was also very great. As the season advanced there was a second distribution to each corps of 34,000 woollen shirts, 25,000 pairs of woollen stockings, 25,000 flannel bandages, 25,000 woollen comforters, 25,000 woollen plaids, &c. The resources of the Post Office, moreover, were greatly taxed by the enormous number of letters and newspapers sent to and from the army. From the 16th of July to the 31st of December, 1870, there was an average, taking both ways, of about 400,000 letters and 9,090 papers per day. During the same period, 41,000,000 thalers and 58,000 parcels of all sizes and weights were sent by the War Office to the German military authorities in France; and the soldiers received from or sent to their friends and relatives at home 13,000,000 thalers and 1,219,533 parcels, making 22,173 parcels per day. In addition to the conveyance of these articles, the railways had to carry into France during the late weeks of 1870 and the early weeks of 1871 no fewer than 180,000 fresh troops, together with a continual supply of guns, shells, and ammunition.

The final struggles of France were watched by the representatives of the several dynasties, in the hope of turning them to profit. The Count de Chambord, calling himself Henry V., addressed a letter to the *Union* and the *Gazette de France*, two of his supporters in the press, in which, with that tone of mild paternal patronage which distinguished all his utterances, he gave vent to the sorrows which filled his bosom, and the aspirations which fired his soul. Writing on the 7th of January, he said:—"It is impossible for me any longer to keep silence. I had hoped that the death of so many heroes

* Correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*.

fallen upon the field of battle, that the energetic resistance of a capital resigned to endure all to keep the enemy outside its walls, would spare my country new trials; but the bombardment of Paris wrings from my grief a cry which I cannot restrain. The son of Christian kings who have made France, I groan at the sight of her disasters; condemned to inability to redeem them at the price of my life, I raise my testimony before peoples and kings, and protest, as much as I am able, in the face of Europe, against the most sanguinary and lamentable war that was ever waged. Who should speak to the world, if not I, for the town of Clovis, of Clotilde, of Geneviève; for the town of Charlemagne, of Saint Louis, of Philip Augustus, and of Henry IV.; for the capital of the sciences, of the arts, and of civilisation? No! I will not see the great city perish which each of my ancestors used to call 'my good town of Paris.' And, since I can do nothing more, my voice shall be raised from my exile to protest against the ruin of my country. My voice shall cry to earth and to heaven, assured of meeting with the sympathy of man, and awaiting the justice of God." What the Count could have hoped to effect by this manifesto it would be hard to say. He could scarcely have thought that the Prussians would stop short in their career of triumph, and spare his "good town of Paris," because he was afflicted at the sight of its misfortunes; and it was not much more reasonable to suppose that France would be content to retrace several years of history, and restore the dynasty of the Bourbons, because he was so amiable as to be unhappy at the idea of Paris being bombarded, and so obliging as to declare that he would not see the great city perish—a catastrophe which he was powerless to avert. Yet the object of his letter was clearly political and dynastic. It was a bid for popular support.

The *Courrier de Rennes* backed up the appeal in an indirect way when, on the 21st of January, it wrote:—"We should not forget, in these times of humiliation, of mourning, and of expiation, that it is just seventy-seven years ago, on this very day, that one of the most virtuous and wise Kings who have ever honoured the throne of France—a worthy son of St. Louis—perished on the scaffold, the victim of those men whose tyranny covered their country with blood and ruins before they themselves bent down servilely under the yoke of Napoleon the First." Why, after such a lesson, had Frenchmen been carried away for half a century by every revolutionary wind that blew? The reason, according to this Legitimist journalist, was that France had ignored its Christian mission, and that, seduced by false men of learning, by immoral and infidel writers like Voltaire and Rousseau, she had ever since been trying to build up a social edifice, the basis of which was not respect for God and the Decalogue. "The word of the Gospel," said the prophet of Rennes, "had come to pass: the house which God had not built had crumbled into sand, notwithstanding all the vain efforts of man." It did not appear to be within the knowledge of this writer that what are called "infidel" opinions are quite as common in Germany as in France. A great deal of tawdry sentiment has been indulged in by several writers about the superior devoutness of the German soldier as compared with his French adversary; but it is certain that the French peasantry, from whom the army is mainly recruited, are generally religious from their own point of view. On the other hand, the German soldier is not always a devotee. A correspondent of the *Times*, writing from Alençon on the 18th of January, recorded that, out of the whole army quartered there, he only saw four German soldiers on their knees in the cathedral. The truth is that the Germans conquered the French because they were healthier and stronger, more intelligent and better educated, more impressed with the value of authority, and more earnest, grave, and solid in all they undertook.

According to General Changarnier, Prince Napoleon was endeavouring about the same time to effect a restoration of the Empire in the person of the Prince Imperial. In a letter written on the 15th of January, the general said that while returning from the Post Office he was closely followed by the Emperor's cousin. "I was surprised," wrote Changarnier, "to see this big fat person filling up my poor little parlour; but I preserved my soldier's coolness, and, without asking him to sit down, inquired how it happened that I had the honour of his visit. After many compliments, impossible to be repeated, about my importance and my renown, the Prince added, 'You alone can save France, and put an end to this war. The Empress is but a brute. You must be Regent, and bring back the little Prince. I can guarantee you the assent of Prussia and Bismarck. You will assemble on the frontier 150,000 of our prisoners, commanded by generals of your own choosing. When you shall have executed the members of the Provisional Government, and some few other scoundrels, order will be permanently restored. If you agree to this proposal, I have an agent ready to take the news to Count Bismarck.' 'Prince,' I replied to him, 'I have done with romancing, and will not put my hand to such an absurd romance as this'—and then I showed him the way down-stairs." This

narrative must be received with some caution, on account of the evident *animus* of the author; but Prince Napoleon had already interested himself in the restoration of the dynasty, and may have done so again. The denunciation of the Empress as "a brute" is a touch of Nature which looks like truth, considering the sharp reception which her Imperial Majesty had given to the Prince at Chislehurst in September, 1870.

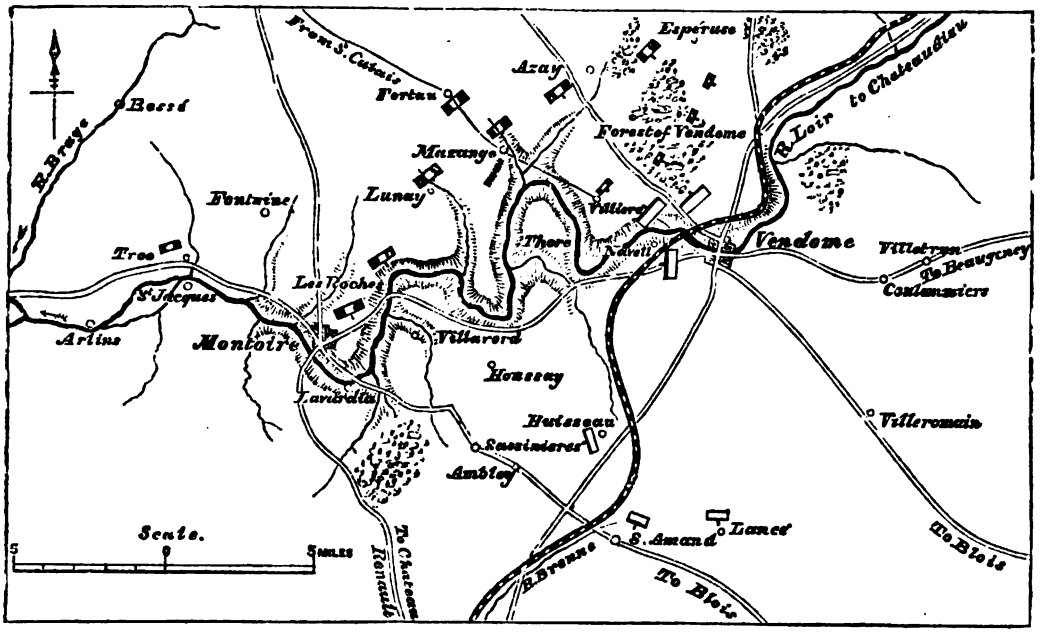
In the minds of many, these unceasing struggles for power created a kind of stupefaction. A French gentleman, writing from one of the occupied departments in January, observed that the pretenders were showing themselves, but that no one worthy to be a chief had yet been discovered. An absolute king was required, to act in combination with two consultative Chambers, which, however, ought to have no initiating power; but no such man gave any signs of his coming. Frenchmen, said this writer, were mere children, and they should only be allowed the liberty to grumble. Such were the views of several at this dismal crisis in the fortunes of France.

The savage and venomous character of the war seemed to intensify with its duration. On the 9th of January, a body of 1,500 Francs-tireurs attacked a company of Jägers near the confluence of the Aube with the Seine, north of the Troyes and Fontainebleau railway. The Germans, being overpowered with superior numbers, were obliged to withdraw to Vichy, where they arrived after two days' forced marches, with a loss of twenty killed, and a large number of wounded. Shortly afterwards, the Jägers, having been reinforced, retracéd their steps, in order to clear the districts on the Aube of the irregular forces of the enemy; and they announced that if, as reported, the people of Marcilly and another village had taken part in the attack, both places would be burnt. On the 22nd, the railway bridge over the Moselle, between Nancy and Toul, was blown up by Francs-tireurs. The fifty Landwehrmen guarding the bridge were surprised and dispersed by about four hundred French soldiers, coming from Langres, who, after accomplishing their task, retired with some prisoners. A few hours later in the day, Fontenoy was burnt down by order of the Governor of Lorraine, and it was stated that this was to be the punishment of any place where railways were destroyed. Such was the system of terrorism by which the Germans hoped to bring the struggle to a conclusion. It may fairly be doubted whether any war of modern times has been conducted on principles so stern and remorseless. It is equally questionable whether such a method of proceeding produced that effect of shortening the duration of hostilities which was its avowed object and suggested justification. The probability is that it prolonged the deadly contest by exciting a wild desire of revenge in many who might otherwise have been disposed to seek an early peace. But the conduct of the Prussians in 1870—71 has established an evil precedent which is only too likely to be followed in succeeding years.

The list of surrendered fortresses was augmented on the 25th of January by the capitulation of Longwy, between Thionville and Montmédy, near the Belgian frontier. It had been bombarded for nine days; but it was not until the Prussians brought up their heavy artillery that the continuation of the defence became clearly impossible. The positions occupied by the Prussians were identical with those which they took up in 1815; but for a long while their attack was wholly ineffective. During the last few days, however, the bombardment was very severe, the French batteries were dismounted, and the garrison were thrown into panic and confusion. Of food there was abundance. According to some accounts, the fortress was provisioned for three years; at any rate, it had stores which would have lasted for several months. At length, when resistance became hopeless, these were sold at nominal prices, and barrels of wine were set running in mere waste. The Prussian commander, Krenski, on entering the fortress, announced the approaching fall of Paris. He took 4,000 prisoners and 200 guns, and found the city in a deplorable state. Longwy is a hexagon fortress of six bastions and two cavaliers, with barracks for a garrison of 6,000. The powder-magazines, like those of Phalsburg, are constructed in the rock, and are famed for their dryness. The town is built on a hill, and is situated in the department of the Moselle. The fortified part occupies the higher place; the rest lies beneath the southern escarpment, and contains several old monastic buildings. In the sixth century the place belonged to a grandson of Clovis, who built on the site of the present fortress a fortified castle, inaccessible on three sides, the materials of which were derived from an ancient Roman camp close by. During the Middle Ages, and for some centuries later, the town and its vicinity were perpetually ravaged by the contending armies of great powers seeking to obtain possession; and towards the middle of the seventeenth century the whole region was abandoned, and left uncultivated for some years. Longwy passed from German into French hands in 1670, when Louis XIV. razed all the castles and fortified dwellings in the vicinity, dismantled Longwy itself, and ordered Vauban to

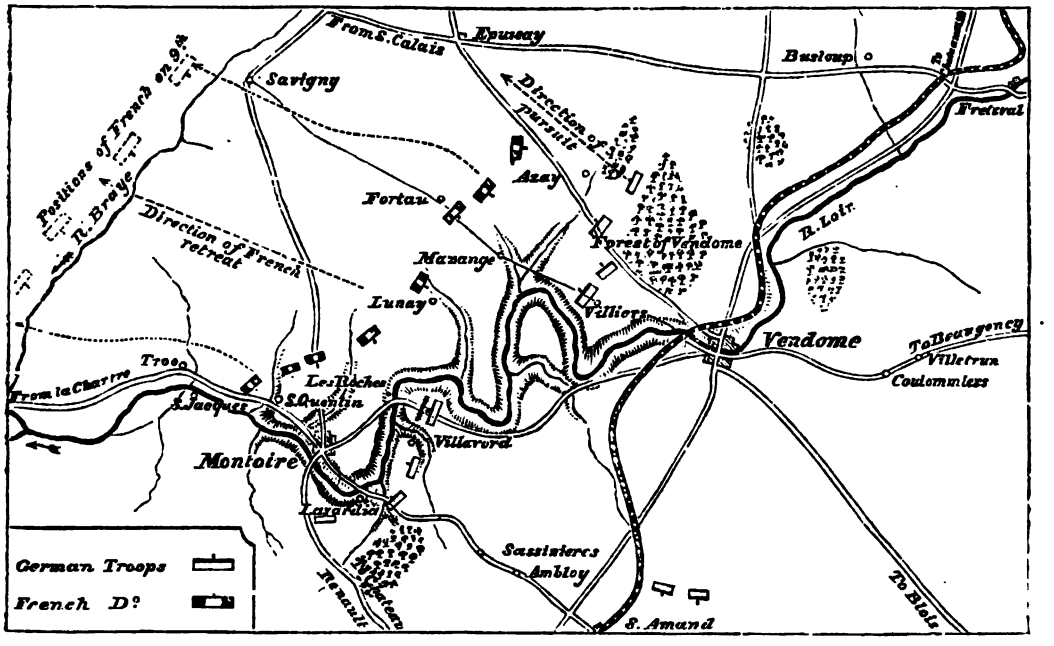


FORTS NOISY AND AVRON FROM NOISY-LE-GRAND.



BATTLE OF VENDÔME (NO. 1), 6TH JANUARY, 1871.

The French occupy the Forest of Vendôme with skirmishers and Francs-tireurs, holding Montoire and Mazaugé in force.



BATTLE OF VENDÔME (NO. 2), 4 P.M.

The Prussians gain the Plateau of Villiers, and force back the French left. The French still hold Montoire. The rapidity of the German pursuit enables them to cut off the French from the road from Epuisay to St. Calais.

create a fortress of the second class on the site. When the Prussians invaded France in 1792, Longwy was speedily surrendered to the Duke of Brunswick, and the Assembly, in consequence, branded the inhabitants as "infamous traitors to the country," and ordered that their houses should be destroyed. The commandant, M. de Lavergne, was taken to Paris, and sentenced to the guillotine. His wife begged to be allowed to die with him, but in vain, until, in a burst of passionate eloquence,

she denounced the tribunal, defied it, and shouted again and again, "Long live the King!" Then she was condemned to death, and perished with her husband. Longwy was once more besieged in 1815, when, after being attacked and blockaded for ten weeks, it was taken by the Prussians. The fortress was armed by Marshal Niel in 1867, when there was a probability of war on the Luxemburg question; but the works were suspended on the conclusion of the Treaty of London.

The bombardment of 1871 did a great deal of damage. Seen from afar, the town looked like a ruin; and in truth a large number of houses had been utterly destroyed, while scarcely one escaped without being struck. The barracks, the military hospital, the Hôtel de Ville, and other public buildings, were reduced to mere wrecks, and the chief private hotel was much shattered. Several of the townspeople had sought refuge in Belgium before the bombardment began; those who remained, hid themselves in the casemates—long vaulted passages, tier above tier, covered with masonry and earth, such as are to be found in all fortresses, and which, according to their situation and construction, are used either as galleries for the reception of artillery (which fires through embrasures pierced for the purpose in the outer wall), or as places of protection for troops, provisions, and ammunition. While the unhappy civilians were in these passages, they heard all around and above them, to adopt the language of Mr. Samuel James Capper, in writing to the *Times*, "a noise as if hell had broke loose, for, from the commencement to the end, 30,000 shells, great and small, fell and exploded in the town." The fugitives were indeed hardly safe even under cover; for at one time a tremendous hole was made in the roof of the central shaft leading down to the casemates. During the siege, nine Germans were killed and twenty wounded, and the attacking force was subjected to great discomforts. The ground was frozen hard, and the soldiers were often unable to dig it for the construction of the necessary works of approach. On one occasion, when a battery had to be established at an extremely exposed point, the officer in command covered the cannon with branches of trees, so as to make them appear like peasants' carts. The resistance of Longwy was described by the Germans as "too much for a joke, and too little for earnest;" but just previous to the surrender it was resolved to take the place by assault. For this purpose, storming parties had actually been told off, and a battery of eighteen mortars got into position, when the garrison intimated their readiness to capitulate. "The ramparts are planted with trees," wrote Mr. Capper, who was one of the commissioners sent out by the Society of Friends for the relief of the distress in France; "and the Germans having swept these with shell and shrapnel, the soldiers would not stand to their guns, as the wounds caused by splinters of wood are ghastly." Mr. Capper contributed funds for the immediate relief of the distress existing in the town, and promised more towards the rebuilding of the houses. He had some conversation with a captain of artillery, who said, "Since I was a child, the word 'enemy' has never been taught me—only 'Frenchman.'" It was suggested by Mr. Capper that probably in future the French would entertain the same feeling of undying hate towards the Germans; to which the captain, evading this particular branch of the subject, replied, "You in England should least of all complain of us. You have always managed your own affairs in your own way, and have never brooked interference from any one. *We* have had to endure it, because we have been weak and disunited; but that is over now." Several of the German soldiers occupying Longwy after the surrender were very drunk, though not at all ferocious. The captain said, in excuse to Mr. Capper, "They are many of them Polacks, who can stand very little drink; they have been half-fed and starved with the cold, and now the inhabitants on all sides have pressed drink upon them." He seemed, however, to be ashamed of the fact, as showing a failure of discipline. The garrison of Longwy counted between three and four thousand men, while the besiegers had a force of about double that number. In 1815, the garrison consisted of only two hundred men, to the great surprise of the besiegers when they entered.

The distress in those parts of France occupied by the Germans was now very great, notwithstanding all that had been done by English and other societies in aid of the sufferers. Nothing could exceed the aspect of desolation in many departments once famous for prosperity and abundance. A merchant of Bordeaux, writing from that city about the middle of the month, said:—"The public works, viaducts, and railways, are all more or less injured, the drainage spoilt, and the culture of the land given up; above all, stock of every description is destroyed. The foundation for disease exists everywhere, and smallpox is very prevalent, as well as dysentery." Fears were entertained lest in many districts there should be absolutely no harvest in the ensuing autumn, for lack of seed to sow in the earlier months of the year. It was to meet this necessity that the Peasant Farmers' Seed

Fund was established in London; and there can be no question that it conferred very solid benefits on France. A meeting of the General Committee of the Fund was held at the Salisbury Hotel, Salisbury Square, on the 30th of January, when a report from the Executive Committee was read, in which it was observed that a difference of opinion existed as to whether the seed should be distributed then, or withheld until the conclusion of the war. On behalf of the latter view, it was urged that there was no certainty of the donations being applied to their legitimate purpose during the continuance of hostilities: the corn, for instance, might be eaten by the German cavalry. Those who advocated the immediate distribution, argued that if there were any delay it would be impossible to sow the land during the coming spring, or to save the peasantry from impending famine. Mr. J. R. Robinson—a gentleman intimately connected with the Fund, the interests of which he advanced with great zeal and energy—read to the meeting some extracts from a letter written to him by Mr. Bullock, the administrator of the *Daily News* Fund. From these it appeared that the condition of France was still such as to demand the most strenuous assistance. Writing from Levignon on January 24th, he said:—"I have at last awakened from a horrid nightmare of gutted houses, broken windows, stove-in doors, shutters wrenched off their hinges, torn-up floors, cupboards turned inside out, bits of curtains, carpets, and tassels scattered about heedlessly; ruins of chairs, tables, and mirrors; untold heaps of letters and papers littered all over landings and staircases; lawns trampled into ploughed fields, garden fences broken down—in short, utter desolation everywhere. To have seen with one's own eyes this region, which was once an earthly paradise, literally converted into a howling wilderness, is a fearful experience to have gone through, and cannot fail to leave an ineffaceable impression on the memory." Again he said:—"When the war is over, all—rich and poor alike—will come to bare walls, and every kind of ruin staring them in the face. There will be so much to be done—such overwhelming need of every kind of assistance—that it might appear the wiser course not to attempt to do anything at all. But that is proverbially the case when one attempts to grapple with a gigantic evil." Mr. Bullock added that large quantities of wheat for spring sowing, of oats, vetches, lucerne, trefoil, and every kind of grass seed, would be urgently needed, especially on the northern side of Paris. Owing partly to the impossibility of procuring coal to keep the beet-root sugar factories going, and partly to the scarcity of hands, the beet-root crop had in many instances been left to rot in the ground; and, in consequence of the extreme severity of the weather, the fields that had been sown with wheat in the previous autumn were then perfectly yellow, the tender green of the growing crop having been withered by the frost. It was ultimately resolved by the General Committee of the French Peasant Farmers' Seed Fund to send an agent or agents to France, to aid in the distribution of the seed.

Miss Cross, of Weybridge—a lady who did a great deal of excellent work in connection with the *Daily News* Fund—wrote a very interesting but painful letter from Sedan on the 13th of December. The distribution of soup to the poor starving people was attended by several touching little incidents. Many of the applicants were so disfigured by suffering and want that their faces seemed hardly human; others had scarcely voice enough to answer to their names. Each waited his or her turn patiently in the falling snow, without pushing or quarrelling. One little girl, who had walked a long way to get the soup for her family at Balan, said, in answer to an inquiry whether she had not found the distance too far, "Ah, no! For such good soup one would walk many miles." Not long afterwards, this poor child died of typhus fever, "as bravely as she had lived," wrote Miss Cross. Her mother and two sisters were ill of the fever at the same time.

Writing on January 10th, Miss Cross did not give so good an account of the manners of the people waiting their turn for the soup. Some tried to get more than their just portion; there was a good deal of pushing and quarrelling, and the weakest went to the wall. "It would be wholly disheartening," said Miss Cross, "to combat so much lying and deceit, if it were not for the many bright instances of self-abnegation, of untold misery, and of quiet resignation to all the nameless horrors of this terrible war." The promise of grain for sowing would, in the opinion of this intelligent observer, do more than anything to rouse the peasantry from their state of apathetic despondency. As it was, the men were frequently to be seen lounging listlessly at the doors of their untidy cottages, or else were employed by the Germans to draw about goods for the army in the family cart. On the 19th of January, Miss Cross went to see some of the families suffering from "famine fever." She found one mother in a state of stupefied despair, hanging over the bed of her little daughter, who was gasping for breath, with a face drawn, pinched, and grey. "If this one dies," said the mother, "it will be the worst I can go through." Her own mother and her sister had already died

of the fever, and her husband, as he lay in another bed, was now raving in delirium, or watching, in quiet intervals, the movements of his dying child. On the following day, the troubles of the little one had come to an end for ever in this world; but the father still languished in his suffering, and muttered of the broken or burnt instruments of his trade. He had been a thriving ironmonger at Bazeilles, and was of course ruined in the atrocious destruction of that town by the Bavarians during the battle of Sedan. The family now lived in a sort of loft, dirty and cheerless. A little farther on lived a family of seven in one small room: two were ill with fever, and four with other complaints. Still, there was not nearly so much illness as before the establishment of the soup-kitchens. Trade was beginning to revive in the little towns and villages, and it was generally felt that, if the war could be brought to an end, France might lift herself once more out of the abyss of misery in which she was engulfed.

A valuable statement of the services rendered by the representatives of the National Society for Aid to the Sick and Wounded in War was put forth at the beginning of January by Colonel Loyd-Lindsay, Chairman of the Central Committee of that Society. He said:—

"The English army ambulance, from Woolwich, which at first displayed itself at St. Germains in all the perfection of smartness and cleanliness which belongs to an English hospital, has since been engaged in the rough work of a rapid campaign. On the 12th of November, a division of the ambulance, under Surgeon Manley, V.C., of the Royal Artillery, started in the direction of Chartres, where they joined the Twenty-second Division of the Prussian army, by whom their horses were foraged and their men rationed. With this division they continued to march in a westerly direction, and on the 18th of November were present at the engagement which took place at a village named Torcy; the wagons were taken forward, the stretchers brought out, and the wounded collected. The ambulance wagons were then ordered to proceed to Châteauneuf, where a hospital had been established; it was nine at night before the ambulances were cleared, and the following day they were again engaged in carrying in wounded — the Prussians putting their serious cases into the English wagons, as being steadier and less liable to jolt than their own. On the 20th the division moved on, and on the 21st they were again engaged near Bretoncelles, where the ambulances again did good service. On the 2nd of December, a general action took place at the village of Bogenis; an English hospital was formed at a farm-house, which was soon filled with wounded, even to the stables and out-houses. Dr. Manley caused the canteen to be prepared, coffee and milk being served out to every man in the village before his wounds were dressed. The fight had been long and exhausting, and the cold extreme; and this treatment was most beneficial. After this refreshment, the wounded were attended to, and the more important operations proceeded with in the farm-house kitchen. Whilst still operating, at ten o'clock at night, the general commanding the division came, and begged that the wagons might be again sent to the field, as there were numerous wounded not yet brought in. His request was immediately complied with, and it was not till three in the morning that all the wounded were brought back. At daylight, coffee, and soup made from extract of meat, were again served out, port wine and brandy being also given when needed. For some days after this, the English ambulance was working in the surrounding villages, where as many as a thousand wounded men were congregated. Surgeon Manley draws attention to a great defect in the German medical service, viz., that no arrangements are made for giving nourishment to the wounded, either on the field of battle, or immediately after they are brought in. In his opinion, this ought to rank in importance before the dressing of wounds. The work during all this period was most severe, and Surgeon Manley gives great credit to all there—both officers and men—who worked under him. The message which he received on one occasion from General von Wittich shows that the services rendered by his ambulance were thankfully received and appreciated by the Prussian commanders. 'Receive,' said the general, 'our heartfelt thanks for your most valuable aid, given to us in the moment of our great need, when our own ambulances were not forthcoming.'"

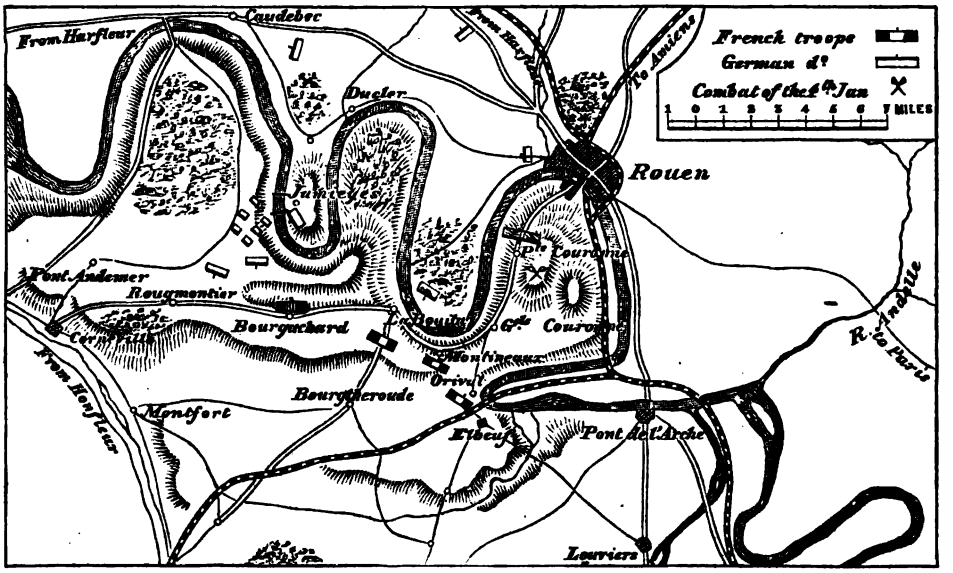
In the stricken country itself, a French Evangelical Society was formed, to relieve the wounded and the sufferers from the war, irrespective of creed or nationality; and a meeting of the London Committee in connection with this society was held on the 19th of January at the residence of the Hon. Arthur Kinnaird, M.P. The chief feature of the evening was a statement by Madame Mallet, daughter of a well-known Paris banker, and one of the leading agents in the prosecution of the society's work. This lady had just returned from a visit to Lille and the northern districts of France, and she alleged that she had met with great and almost insurmountable obstacles, owing mainly to the almost ubiquitous presence of the Germans, and the fact that they pretty generally appropriated the aid intended for the wounded and destitute. In spite of these difficulties, however, help was afforded at various places, with the assistance of the Protestant Almoner of the Army of the North. In the course of her address, Madame Mallet was asked by a lady in the room whether the Belgian side of the frontier would not afford ground for depositories for relief in kind; to which she replied that she had never seen any evidence of Belgian

generosity, and that the French wounded in Belgium were not particularly well cared for. With reference to the condition of Paris, she read a letter of recent date from a Protestant relief committee there, from which it appeared that Paris was divided into districts and sections for beneficent purposes, and that ladies regularly went about among the poor for the purpose of alleviating their privations and sufferings. Such had been the liberality displayed in this work that within three days the committee had collected 29,700 francs. Through an agency organised by M. Sautter, various articles of food had been distributed among the soldiers in the trenches; and the moral effect of this kind of aid had been exceedingly good. The sphere of usefulness of this society was, however, circumscribed by the fact of its being a Protestant association working in a country almost wholly Romanist. It is to be regretted that it compromised its benevolence by an admixture of proselytism. Amongst the articles presented to the French prisoners in German fortresses were several copies of the "Life of Captain Hedley Vicars," translated into French. There is but little probability that the work in question effected a single conversion among the French captives, while it is very possible that its circulation may have done harm to the cause of Protestantism by enabling the Roman Catholics to say that heretics are only charitable with an eye to business. Such a speech would no doubt involve great unfairness, and certainly the followers of the Pope lose no opportunity of making converts. But it is always objectionable to associate kindness with any secondary motive, the nature of which is at any rate liable to misconstruction. It takes away from the graciousness of charity when it is made the means of advancing an object which the donor has at heart. The Greek Graces—which were the Charities—came only in the nakedness of their pure simplicity.

A question of international law, affecting the belligerents, was brought before the English Court of Admiralty in the month of January, and is deserving of notice as illustrating the complexities of this department of jurisprudence. A certain vessel, called the *International*, was purchased, immediately before the breaking out of the war between France and Germany, by the India-rubber, Gutta-percha, and Telegraph Works Company, for the ordinary purposes of laying submarine cables. During the latter part of 1870 she was employed in laying a cable between Jersey and England for our own Government; and on the 28th of November the Company entered into a contract with the Director General of the Postal Service of France, to lay down a cable between Dunkirk and Bordeaux. The Company was to supply 500 mètres of land cable for each place at which touched; but it had nothing whatever to do with connecting the lines. On the 21st of December, 1870, the *International* was lying in the Thames with the cable on board, when she was seized by the Customs officers; on the 27th, she was detained by a warrant of the Secretary of State. Application for the release of the vessel and of the cable was made in the Admiralty Court on the 12th of January, 1871, when Sir J. Karslake, the leading counsel for the Company, contended that the seizure was not justified by the facts of the case. The warrant assumed that there had been an infringement of the eighth section of the Foreign Enlistment Act, which provided that any person who built, or caused to be built, any ship, knowing, or having reason to believe, that she was intended for the military or naval service, or would be applied to the service, of any foreign State at war with a State friendly to the English Government, should be deemed to have committed an offence punishable with fine or imprisonment, and the ship should be forfeited to her Majesty. But this ship was not built to be employed in the service of any foreign Government. Its business was simply the laying of telegraphic cables. The particular cable on board when the vessel was seized, and which was furnished under contract with the French Government, was to be laid in the sea from a point on the shore fifty miles from Bordeaux to Dunkirk. It was not to be laid in one continuous line, but would pass over strips of land in part of its course, and the Company was not to fill up the gaps or provide the instruments by which the cable was to be worked. The Company had only to do with the deep-sea cable. At the time the contract was entered into, the seat of the delegated French Government was at Tours. It removed shortly afterwards to Bordeaux, but the Company did not contract to lay the cable to that city. The secretary of the French Post Office, M. Souvenez, had made an affidavit that the object of laying down the cable was to supplement the various lines of communication which had been broken by the military operations, and to keep up the communications between France and America, and France and the north of Europe. The interpretation clause of the Foreign Enlistment Act included military telegraphy among military operations; but it was maintained on behalf of the Company that the laying of a deep-sea telegraphic cable is not military telegraphy. On the part of the English Government, it was submitted by the Attorney-General (Sir R. P. Collier) that the cable was really intended to be used in connection with

military operations, and that, by restoring the broken communications between the different armies of France, it would in effect be equal to an additional army. The very name of the French Government—"The Government of the National Defence"—was of importance (argued the Attorney-General) in considering the matter. That Government was called into being to provide for the national defence; it had no other object. It was absurd to suppose that the telegraph was wanted for commercial purposes; and the Government was therefore bound to act as it had done. Judgment was given by Sir R. J. Phillimore on January 17th. It was in favour of the Company. While allowing that there was a *primâ facie* case for detaining the vessel and its cargo, the Judge held that these must now be released, the primary object of the cable being commercial. The cable might indeed be used for military purposes; but that was not sufficient to divest it of its original character. It would form a valuable commercial line, and be of the utmost importance to the great commercial centre of Bordeaux.

Whatever the uses to which the cable might ultimately be put, there cannot be a doubt that its main, or at least immediate, object was to aid the Provisional Government in the prosecution of the war. The decision of Sir R. J. Phillimore would therefore have been a clear gain to that Government, had it been in a position to avail itself of the advantage thus accruing; and the fact would very probably have been remembered against us by Germany, if she had resolved on making a demand for alleged breaches of international law. But the war was so near its close that it mattered little to the French whether the cable was laid or not.



DEFEAT OF GENERAL ROYE, JANUARY 7TH, 1871.

The Germans holding Rouen and Grand Couronne cross by pontoons at Jumières, finally occupy Bourgachard and Bourgtheroulde, and threaten Pont Audemer. This was the last attempt to threaten the left flank of the German Army of the North.

CHAPTER XIII.

Movements of Bourbaki—Ricciotti Garibaldi and the Commandant of Châtillon-sur-Seine—The French Project for attacking Werder and relieving Belfort—Weak Point in the Calculation—German Arrangments for resisting the French Attack—Slowness of Bourbaki's March—The Garibaldians—Misapprehensions of Bourbaki—Skirmishes with the Enemy—Werder retires from Vesoul—Fighting at Vallerois and Villersexel—A Disputed Victory—Villersexel abandoned by the Germans—Werder's New Positions in Front of Belfort—Engagements in other Parts of the East of France—Langres and the Francs-tireurs—The Battles in Front of Belfort—Fighting on January 15th—Intense Cold—Deficient Commissariat of Both Armies—Renewed Fighting on the 16th—The Battle again resumed on the 17th—Despatch of General Bourbaki—He determines, on the 18th, to withdraw to the South—Disorderly Flight of the French, and Pursuit by the Germans—Honours to General Werder—Movements of Manteuffel for intercepting Bourbaki—Brief Stay of Bourbaki at Besançon—Continued and Desperate Flight of the French—Escape of Large Numbers on to Swiss Territory—Attempted Suicide of Bourbaki—Garibaldian Successes at Dijon—The Siege of Belfort—The Prussians driven from Gien.

IT is now time to turn our attention to General Bourbaki, who, after the series of battles on the Loire at the beginning of December, was stationed for a while about Bourges and Nevers, which he



BOURBAKI'S RETREAT TO SWITZERLAND.

quitted a few days before Christmas, at the head of the Eighteenth and Twentieth Corps, on an expedition towards the east. One corps, under Le Comte, he left behind him at Bourges. His designs were not precisely known to the Germans, who at first regarded them with a little uneasiness; and it was owing to this movement, combined with the operations of Garibaldi, that General Werder, at the close of 1870, evacuated Dijon, Dôle, and Gray, and established himself in the neighbourhood of Vesoul, farther to the north. Garibaldi alone was presenting a sufficiently formidable front to Werder to inspire him with some apprehension; and reinforcements were sent to the latter early in 1871, the Germans abandoning the siege of Langres, and hurrying up to the support of the more important position. In the pause previous to the recommencement of active operations, a little verbal passage of arms occurred between Ricciotti Garibaldi and the Prussian commandant at Châtillon-sur-Seine. The former complained to the latter that some of the inhabitants of that town had been threatened with reprisals on account of the surprise of German troops effected there by Ricciotti's Francs-tireurs on the 19th of November. He said he could not admit that a victory won by the bravery of a regular corps warranted such measures; and he exhorted the Germans to act loyally, and not like Vandals, who only think of plunder. If they carried out their detestable project, he would not spare any one of the 200 Prussian prisoners he had on his hands. To this the commandant replied that, the inhabitants having taken part in the surprise, he should treat them according to the laws of war, and that he could not regard Ricciotti's threat as serious, as, for every Prussian prisoner shot, twenty or more French might be executed.

Bourbaki's design in moving eastward was of a bold and hazardous nature, though not devoid of plausible elements. When reinforced at the beginning of January, Bourbaki had under his command four corps, of three divisions each; while the reserve division, under Cremer, consisted of 13,000 men. The combined force presented a total of 133,000 men, with 300 guns and mitrailleuses; and to these were to be added the Garibaldians. Bourbaki's troops, however, were not in good condition, and the general himself was strongly disinclined to the adventure on which he was now entering by the orders of M. Gambetta. His men, he urged, were not equipped and supplied for an arduous campaign; but the War Minister was imperative, and it was openly stated at Bordeaux that the new Army of the East was going to raise the siege of Belfort, and to invade Germany, as a means of drawing off the Germans from the investment of Paris, and of compelling them to fight for their communications. The forces under the command of Werder were small in comparison with those which his opponents could direct against him. They probably numbered not more than 50,000, and they had to reduce or hold a number of towns, to guard the railway lines converging on Paris, and to keep the Garibaldians and other French forces in check. It was hoped to isolate this comparatively small army by a rapid and unexpected attack, to sever the German communications by Dijon and Vesoul, and to obtain possession of the great railway line from Strasburg to Paris, by which, more than by any other route, the invaders maintained their connection with the Fatherland. Prince Frederick Charles, it was supposed, would follow Bourbaki with the whole or a portion of his troops; but this would leave Chanzy all the more free to move on Paris, while Bourbaki, having the start of the German commander, would be in the better position, and might calculate on retarding and baffling his advance. Even if the Prince, in combination with the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, should decide on operating against Chanzy, it was anticipated that the latter was strong enough to encounter any attack of which he might be made the object. M. Gambetta, therefore, looked forward hopefully to this new combination; and General Bourbaki was sent on an enterprise which, despite some promising features, was, on the whole, fraught with peril.

The flaw in Gambetta's calculation was in the assumption that Prince Frederick Charles would follow Bourbaki, thus leaving between Chanzy and Paris only the army of the Grand Duke; or that, at the worst, Chanzy would be more than equal to the Prince and the Grand Duke together. The German military authorities seem, after a very brief period of disquietude, to have fully relied on the ability of General Werder and of the other commanders in the east, as soon as the new dispositions were carried out, to cope with the united forces of Bourbaki, Cremer, and Garibaldi; and accordingly Prince Frederick Charles, relieved from the necessity of watching Bourges, turned his face to the north-west, and, in conjunction with the Grand Duke, commenced those operations against Chanzy which, as we have seen, the French general was incapable of resisting. If, indeed, Bourbaki could have succeeded in cutting the communications of the Germans, and if the Germans had been unable to restore them, the position of the invaders would of course have been most

serious; but a success so striking was exceedingly improbable, and the eastward expedition of Bourbaki left Chanzy exposed to the combined attack which proved his ruin. "The project, in truth, considered properly," says an able critic in the *Times*, "was simply a series of eccentric movements, to be executed by inadequate forces, against an enemy vastly superior and in a formidable central position; and those who have admired it keep out of sight the cardinal and decisive fact of the immense disparity between the antagonist armies. We incline to think that at this conjuncture it had become impossible to relieve Paris; the German commanders had been able to rectify the miscalculation they had made, and the barrier of the covering armies, which, in consequence of the bombardment, could now be reinforced from within, had become too formidable to be broken. Nevertheless, one chance may have remained; and if it had been seized by the French generals, they would at least have averted a frightful catastrophe. Had Bourbaki, instead of going off to the east, vigorously attacked Prince Frederick Charles, he would certainly have detained a very large part of the Prince's forces. In that event, although probably the operation would not have succeeded, Chanzy might have defeated the Grand Duke and any other divisions in his front, and at least have endeavoured to reach Paris; in any case, the French armies would have had their lines of retreat open, and would have followed the rules of prudent strategy."* It seems doubtful whether the plan finally resolved on was communicated to either Trochu or Chanzy. The idea is said to have been conceived by an obscure Staff officer, and by him imparted to M. Gambetta, who regarded it very favourably. It was the last effort of expiring France, and its only result was to make the final collapse still more exhausting and disastrous.

The attack of General Bourbaki from the east was to be made in combination with one from the south by Garibaldi; and, to meet this concentric movement, General Werder was joined by General von Schmeling, from the vicinity of the Swiss frontier, and by other forces from Delle and the country near Porentruy, or Pruntrut. The Second Army Corps from Paris was also sent to increase the strength of the Army of the East, and to keep watch, from Troyes to Châtillon-sur-Seine, on the movements of Bourbaki. The siege of Paris was now considered to be so safe from interruption that it was found possible to spare a portion of the investing force for service in a distant part of the country. This corps, strengthened by some divisions from Metz and from the German Army of the North, was after a time placed under the command of General Manteuffel, who was likewise invested with supreme authority over the whole combined forces. The precise instructions to Manteuffel, as far as his own especial corps was concerned, were to push rapidly forward as soon as Bourbaki had got near to Belfort, and to fall suddenly on his flank and rear, while Werder was engaging him in front. In the general arrangement of this scheme of operations, Count Moltke exhibited all his accustomed strategical mastery. Before Bourbaki could arrive at his proposed scene of action, the machinery for crushing him was prepared and partially set in motion; and whatever advantages he might have hoped from a surprise, were at once rendered impossible by the vigilance of that calm and piercing intellect which swayed the fortunes of the war from Versailles.

Celerity of movement was the one condition most essential to Bourbaki; yet he moved but slowly. His soldiers were so ill-clad and ill-fed that to march quickly was doubtless a physical impossibility to them; and, being insufficiently officered, their spirits were not maintained by the frequency of bright examples of endurance in those above them. The troops fell off in hundreds from the main body on the line of march; and the army was in a disorganised state when, after a period of several days, it reached the valley of the Saône. The forces of Garibaldi, being already on the spot, were in a better condition, yet contained many loose and unserviceable elements. At the time in question they are said to have numbered 12,000; and their arms consisted of Spencer and Remington rifles, chassepôts, and *tabatières*, with a little artillery, not of the best. Garibaldi, Bourbaki, and Cremer had each the rank of General of Division, and there was no General-in-Chief. The movements of the combined armies were controlled from Bordeaux. Our own Nelson frequently complained of his plans being marred by instructions from the Home Government: the efforts of the national armies of France seem to have been equally shackled by the amateur strategy of M. Gambetta. Bourbaki's want of heart in the enterprise was of course another circumstance conducive to ill-success; and, moreover, the original design of the campaign was not followed out in all its details. The Staff officer who projected the plan was in the first instance offered the command; but he declined to accept it, on the ground that he would not serve under a revolutionary Government, and Bourbaki was then appointed to the post. He appears not to have

* "The Campaign of 1870-71"—*Times*, March 10th, 1871.

thoroughly understood the nature of the scheme he was to carry out. The writer in the *Times* just quoted says that "the Staff officer, rightly appreciating the necessity of rapid movements and good lines of retreat, had proposed that the French army should advance in four or five columns at least, and should especially hold in force the passages along the Swiss frontier; and for this purpose he had insisted that the march to Belfort should be made by a number of converging routes, and that the roads by Montbéliard and Pontarlier should be occupied by several divisions. Instead of this, Bourbaki chose to move with the great mass of his men in a single column through the rugged defiles in the valley between the Ognon and the Doubs, throwing out only very feeble wings; and the result was, of course, to retard his progress, and to confine him almost to one line of operations." He arrived at Dijon on the 2nd of January. On the 5th, large numbers of French troops were posted near Rioz, on the Vesoul and Besançon road. They made a reconnaissance near Vellepaux, north of Rioz, but were driven back by a German force consisting of three battalions, two light field-batteries, and a squadron of cavalry. On the following day there were reconnoitring engagements near Echenoy-le-Sec and Leonecy, when the French were again defeated, with considerable loss.

The movements of Bourbaki were very undecided, and his progress towards Belfort continued to be exceedingly slow. He could accomplish only four or five miles a day, and, considering all the circumstances of the time, it may perhaps be a matter for wonderment that he was able to keep his army together at all. His march has been described as heartrending. The men were famished, dispirited, and shivering with the cold, which their scanty raiment did but little to exclude. The few Staff officers by whom they were accompanied were ignorant of their duties, and perpetually giving wrong orders; and the artillery and trains were in utter confusion. Nevertheless, General Werder considered the advance of the new Army of the East sufficiently serious to render it advisable on his part to retire from Vesoul, and take up a position in front of Belfort. On his way thither, he was encountered by a portion of Bourbaki's troops and a number of Garibaldians, who endeavoured to bar his passage. This was on the 9th of January. General Werder was advancing by three roads on Villersexel, when, near Vallerois, to the south-east of Vesoul, he struck upon the flank of the French Twentieth Corps, under General Clinchamp. Severe fighting followed; but in the end Werder took Vallerois, and, compelling the French to develop their forces, repulsed their attacks. The battle raged hotly about the villages of Marat and Moinay, on the heights to the south of which were numerous French batteries, which poured grenades and shrapnel on the Germans, obliging them to evacuate Marat after they had for a time occupied it. At Moinay some German batteries were planted; but the French stationed in the neighbouring woods opened so sharp a musketry fire on the gunners that troops were despatched to clear the ground. The woods, however, were too thick to be penetrated; the attacking force was accordingly withdrawn, and the batteries were sent to the front. The French then advanced on Moinay, but were ultimately driven back, after a brisk interchange of shots. Villersexel was stormed by the Germans during the morning, and the fine château set on fire. The French afterwards made repeated attempts to re-take the village, and the reports from the two combatants were at direct variance as to the final result. The Germans said that the French were baffled in all their endeavours to repossess themselves of Villersexel, and that in the end they retreated, leaving in the hands of the victors two Staff officers, fourteen other officers, 600 rank and file, and two eagles. The French, on the contrary, asserted that all the positions which on the previous day had been assigned to the army for that night were occupied by it when the day closed; and that Villersexel, the key of the position, was carried with a shout of "Long live France! Long live the Republic!" The battle, said this account, lasted until seven o'clock in the evening, and darkness prevented the French from estimating the importance of their victory. General Bourbaki furthermore telegraphed to Bordeaux, either on the 10th or 11th (for the date is not given), that the previous night was passed in driving the Germans from the houses in Villersexel, which they still disputed, and that on the following morning they evacuated the place. It is evident from the later French report that the earlier could not have been correct; for if the Germans did not evacuate Villersexel until the morning of the 10th or 11th, they were clearly not driven out on the evening of the 9th. Still, it seems certain that the Germans did not obtain anything like the success they alleged; and, by their own subsequent admission, they found it necessary to abandon Villersexel at one o'clock A.M. on the morning of the 11th, the position being incapable of defence, and the French in formidable strength before them. As on many other occasions when the rival despatches were diametrically opposed to one another, the action was probably of an indecisive character; and Werder was doubt-

less satisfied at finding that the enemy could not stop his progress towards Belfort, and that his general communications were not disastrously menaced.

On quitting Villersexel, Werder continued his march in a north-eastward direction, and at eight o'clock in the evening reached Belverne, after halting two hours at Le Val for rest and refreshment. It was of importance to the Germans to reach Belfort before Bourbaki; so they marched with rapidity and persistence. At five o'clock on the morning of the 12th they broke up again, and arrived in the vicinity of Héricourt by night. Werder now took up a strong position, with his right wing at Frahier, his centre at Héricourt, and his left at Montbéliard. His troops were thus ranged to the south-west of Belfort, behind a section of the little river Lisaine, with their front towards the west. The German dispositions were sufficiently secure to remove all sense of danger; and the advance of General Manteuffel from the west relieved the invaders from any uneasiness with regard to Nancy, which, it had been feared, might have been attacked by a hostile force. Several precautions, however, were taken in that town to guard against the possibility of a surprise; and these effectually deterred the roving bodies of Francs-tireurs from making any attempt on the place.

The head-quarters of Werder were now fixed at Brevilliers, beyond Héricourt, and the general situation was described by a correspondent of the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, who, writing from the Upper Rhine, said:—"The Lisaine, which runs through a tolerably narrow valley, and is commanded by considerable heights, served as a cover to the line, and this position was in such close communication with the besieging corps in front of Belfort, that in case of need it could serve as a support. There was the less reason for anxiety respecting the safety of this line, as it was not only entrenched, but the French troops before it had already proved themselves of but moderate material. In the north, the mountainous and wooded district in the triangle formed by Champigny, Belfort, and Giromagny, formed a still less accessible point, and the hostile scouts that appeared on the 12th at Lure made the discovery that that was not the spot for forcing a passage. Bourbaki had missed his opportunity, as he had allowed our troops to steal a march upon him, instead of throwing himself rapidly and with force upon Héricourt and the road to Belfort. Thus von Werder had not only time to establish himself firmly in his new position, but also to throw up entrenchments at different points of his line, and arm them with batteries." The position was one of very great strength; yet Bourbaki resolved on attacking it. He had followed the German army after its evacuation of Villersexel, and on the 15th of January he was in front of its new line.

Simultaneously with these events, various engagements of less importance were taking place in other parts of the east of France. On the 8th of January, Danjontin, a small town near Belfort, was stormed by the Prussians. Their losses in this affair, according to a writer from Berne, in Switzerland, could not have been trifling, as the wounded were carried to Pruntrut, the ambulances at Châtenoy and La Chapelle being overcrowded. In other respects the advanced posts of both armies watched each other very closely. Not a day passed without musketry firing being heard on the Swiss frontier. On the 8th it was even heard as close as Delle. On the 10th, the Prussians lying at Croix made a reconnaissance towards Abbevilliers, when an engagement with the Mobiles stationed at Blamont and in the neighbourhood ensued. The writer of a letter from Berne says of this encounter:—

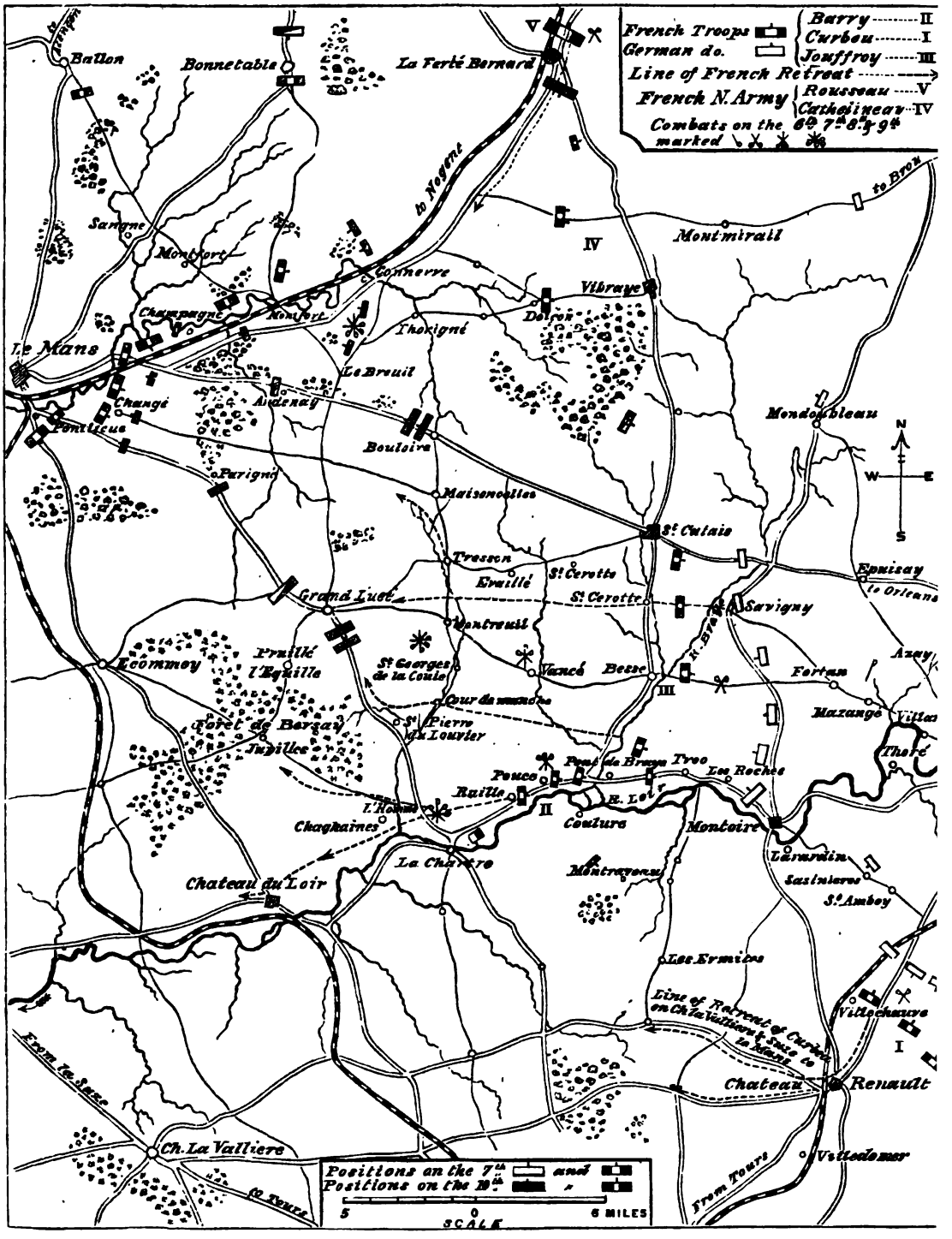
"I arrived at Fahy, the last place on the Swiss frontier, at one o'clock, and learned that the German fore-posts had left Abbevilliers about noon, and that at noon about 4,000 Frenchmen had marched into the town, who subsequently, however, dwindled down to about 400 Mobiles and Francs-tireurs. My attention was soon drawn to two Uhlans, who came in a gallop along the hedgerow out of the wood from Croix, and rode towards the village occupied by the French. Suddenly a few shots fell; the Uhlans turned round, and flew back to the wood. A few minutes later, two small columns and a dozen Uhlans came out of the wood, while a number of German tirailleurs were drawn up on a hill close to the Swiss frontier, against whom the French at Abbevilliers opened fire. A brisk engagement soon commenced. Several troops advanced from Croix, half a dozen of whom were soon rolling in the snow; and further towards Héricourt another detachment of Germans pushed forwards towards the village. The attacking party advanced nearer and nearer, using every tree, bush, or mound of earth. In the meantime, two German guns had been drawn up, which speedily opened fire against the enemy. To the right of the village, in the direction of Héricourt, the fighting became more lively, and all at once the rifle column advanced with a loud hurrah to the assault. The French retreated in the direction of Gray. Half a squadron of Uhlans, who had arrived, with about four companies of infantry reserves, from the woods, advanced upon the village at a gallop, while the little battery was also brought forward. The village was taken, and the firing gradually ceased. The whole affair lasted about three-quarters of an hour. The number of French placed *hors de combat* it was impossible to ascertain; but I saw nine Prussians fetched away by their comrades."

On the 7th, an engagement took place at Sevigny, near Sémur, between a Prussian reconnoitring party of 500 men and two companies of Garibaldians under Ricciotti. The former were compelled to fall back on the Montbard road, with considerable loss; but on the following day Colonel von Dannenberg gained a victory over the Garibaldians near Montbard, which is situated due north of Sémur, on the road to Châtillon-sur-Seine.

When the Germans abandoned the investment of Langres, in order to reinforce Werder, the surrounding country was scoured by numerous detachments of Francs-tireurs, who gave the Prussians, when in small scattered bodies, no little trouble. Langres is a mountain fortress in the department of the Haute Marne, and for a long time past it had formed a base of operations for a large number of guerilla bands. The department is exceedingly well adapted to the particular mode of warfare followed by such combatants. It has been described as an elevated plateau, intersected by small valleys and gorges, covered for the most part by dense underwood, and dotted with villages which generally lie close to the edges of the woods. The Francs-tireurs confined their actions to the shooting down of solitary patrols, the tearing up of railways, and the cutting of telegraph-wires. When threatened by more formidable patrols, they made their escape by forest paths to the nearest village, and at the worst they retired to Langres as to a secure stronghold. The evil at length became so serious to the Prussians in that part of France, that a battalion had orders to clear the country between Chaumont and Neufchâteau of these roving irregulars. The expedition started on the 9th of January, and in the first instance a company was sent against the village of Donnemarie, where a number of Francs-tireurs, who had wounded two men of a Hussar patrol, and carried one of them off, were then hiding. The village was surrounded, and the leader of the Prussian company demanded of the Mayor where the Francs-tireurs and the captured Hussar were to be found. He denied that they were in the village; but shortly afterwards a brisk fire was opened on the company from several of them, who at the same time endeavoured to fly in various directions. In the fight that ensued, nine Francs-tireurs were left for dead, and two were taken prisoners. The captured Hussar was liberated, and the company marched back at midnight to its battalion. In the knapsack of each Franc-tireur was found a complete suit of plain clothes;



SURRENDER OF BOURBAKI'S ARMY.



THE RETREAT ON LE MANS, 7TH TO 10TH JANUARY.

The French retreated concentrically on Le Mans, fighting rearguard actions on each day. The battle of Changé, Perigny, l'Evêque, a Champigné on the 10th, followed by the battle of Le Mans on the 11th, drove the French beyond the Sarthe.

and the Prussians also discovered a list of the whole body, and a small volume (printed at Bordeaux) containing instructions for Francs-tireurs, especially as regards the tearing up of railway lines, so as cause the trains to run off the metals. These i structions were illustrated with plans, to help t

reader in understanding the text. The uniform consisted of dark-coloured trousers with red stripes, a blue blouse with red facings, and a French military cap. That the amateur soldiery were sometimes a trouble to their own Government is shown by an order issued by the French Minister of War, directing the generals of division to take steps against "certain men, isolated or in groups, wearing military uniforms and insignia, sometimes armed, and calling themselves Francs-tireurs, or members of free corps," who were "roving about at a distance from the armies, in the towns and villages, and causing scandal among the population by their vagabondage, their laziness, and frequently by their misconduct." Some further fighting in the neighbourhood of Langres took place a few days later, when a German force met a body of 1,000 Mobile Guards, and, after a fight of an hour and a half, defeated them.

Bourbaki, having arrived in front of Werder's positions on Sunday, the 15th of January, attacked them with great vigour. The battle began in the early morning, and extended from Delle to Montbéliard, Héricourt, and Lure. Throughout the whole day, Bourbaki's four divisions incessantly hurled themselves against the German line, but were unable to drive it back. The fight was chiefly one of artillery, though the French freely used their chassepôts also. The German infantry, posted in protected positions, only took part at a few points, but during their inaction suffered terribly from the bitter cold. Nothing could exceed the tremendous character of the artillery fire. "It did not consist of scattered shots," said a German eye-witness, "but of regular salvoes, and sounded like an incessant peal of thunder, gradually diminishing at sunset. The French also displayed a numerous and good artillery, and set several mitrailleuse batteries to work, but could not compete with our artillery in its commanding positions. Wherever the French infantry showed themselves, and tried to storm any of our batteries, they went to certain destruction. The attacking regiments were cut to pieces by our grenades and cartridges." The honour of the day was to a great extent due to the Baden division, which was ordered to support the Prussian Landwehr posted at the railway embankment behind the Lisaine. The Badeners had scarcely debouched from the wood covering the side of the heights where they were to station themselves, when they were assailed by a terrific fire of grenades and chassepôt bullets, which inflicted great losses. After a nine hours' engagement, the combatants were compelled by darkness to cease fighting, though no definite result had been attained. Both armies bivouacked on the field; and their sufferings from cold and deficient commissariat were extreme. The thermometer was at 14° Fahrenheit. In Cremer's division of the French army, neither officers nor men received any provisions from seven o'clock on the morning of the 14th till six in the evening of the 15th; and the horses and mules, though they had been compelled to march forty miles, were without forage for four-and-twenty hours. The Germans were only 800 yards from the main body of Cremer's division during that trying night; yet officers and privates were alike absorbed in the one vital question of resisting the cold. Huddling about the watch-fires, they passed the dreary hours as best they could, and speculated —doubtless in no hopeful spirit—on the chances of the morrow. The German army was little better off. A member of the Baden division said, in the course of a letter to the *Carlsruhe Gazette*, having reference to this battle:—"Our exertions and privations have now reached a height compared to which the earlier stage of the campaign was a luxury. In addition to the biting cold, we have but too often to dine with Duke Humphrey. I never knew the worth of bread till now, when it is frequently wanting. Cow's flesh and rice, rice and cow's flesh; no idea of wine for the last few days. After fighting till dark on the 15th, and being on our legs from four A.M. till dark, the battalion bivouacked in the icy cold night on a field covered with snow, without straw." The same writer related that for six days he did not undress, and that washing was a chimera; yet that no grumbling was heard, and that the fresh, defiant attitude of the soldiers had not abated.

With respect to the fighting of the 15th, there were the usual contradictory accounts. General Werder alleged that the enemy only got as far as Chagey, and that in the end he was repulsed at all points. The French report affirmed that Bourbaki's corps occupied Montbéliard, Sas-le-Château, Vyans, Savey, Bians, and some other villages. It does not seem likely, however, that they gained so much, or, if they did, they were probably compelled to abandon what they had temporarily won. They seem to have been in no favourable position when the night closed in; but they recommenced the attack on the morning of the 16th. As soon as the daylight was sufficiently strong, five French batteries, consisting of forty guns, opened a hot fire on the Germans from the opposite heights; but the French artillery was of inferior quality to that of the Germans, and Werder's men were posted on a higher elevation. Bourbaki had during the night advanced large bodies of troops towards

the north, and he now pushed on to Chenebier, beyond the right of the German line. The position was taken, and it has been said that a bold flank movement would have enabled the attacking force to reach Belfort. But their opponents soon directed the Degenfeld and Keller brigades against the ground newly occupied by the French, who, after a furious engagement lasting from morning till night, were driven back a considerable distance. Several times Bourbaki's troops endeavoured to storm the German batteries, and to attack the infantry in their protected positions, but with no other result than to add enormously to their losses. Night once more fell on an undecided battle; yet Werder was still in the better position. The earth was covered with wounded; and many of these miserable creatures lay out all night in the cold, and were frost-bitten in the morning.

Further fighting on the 17th only proved more decisively how vain were the attempts of the French to break the German line, and reach Belfort. At eight o'clock in the morning, Bourbaki again sharply attacked Chagey, and at noon Béthancourt. Near Montbéliard, a heavy cannonade was opened at four o'clock in the afternoon, and General Keller was assailed with superior forces at Frahier. But the Germans still stood firm, and at sunset Bourbaki was as far as ever from his object. The severity of the fighting is proved by the fact that the Germans confessed to a loss of 1,200 men during the three days, but comforted themselves by the conviction that the killed and wounded of their adversaries must have been treble, to say nothing of numerous prisoners. General Bourbaki, in a despatch referring apparently to the events of January 17th, stated:—

"I ordered a general attack on the enemy from Montbéliard to Montvandois, endeavouring at the same time to cross the Lisaine at Liettencourt, Busserel, and Héricourt, and to capture St. Valhert. I also gave orders that the left wing should try to turn the enemy, in order to facilitate the operation; but the troops which were destined to make this movement were threatened by an attack on their flanks, and they were obliged to maintain their positions. We had to contend against considerable forces of the enemy, supported by formidable artillery, and reinforced from all sides. The enemy, in consequence of these favourable conditions, the strength of the position he occupied, and the entrenchments he had erected, was able to resist all our efforts, but suffered serious losses.

"The attack we made on the 15th was renewed on the 16th and 17th; and if it has not produced the desired effects we expected from it, in spite of the courage displayed by the troops, it has inspired our enemy with respect, and he has deemed it prudent to remain on the defensive.

"The weather is so bad that it renders difficult any forward movement. I have decided to return to-morrow to the positions we occupied before the battle."

On the 18th, a fresh attack seemed at first to be meditated by the French; but their regiments were disorganised, and could not be induced to fight again. Bourbaki at the same time received intelligence of the approach of German reinforcements; and, growing fearful for the safety of his troops, he hastily determined to withdraw to the south, and to endeavour to gain the road to Besançon. He was seized with a dread that the legions of Prince Frederick Charles were at his back, and his subsequent proceedings exhibit the hurry and confusion of a mind distracted and panic-stricken. He retreated through the narrow valley by which he had approached, pursued by the Germans. Abbevilliers was taken by the enemy on the 18th, and the garrison, consisting of about 400 Francs-tireurs, with four guns, withdrew to Villars-sous-Blamont, which, however, was evacuated on the following day. A number of the inhabitants also fled with their household goods to the Swiss village of Damvant. Montbéliard, the fortified castle of which had remained in the continuous occupation of the invader, was also deserted by the French; and on the 19th of January the Germans possessed themselves of the heights commanding the town. On the 19th and 20th the French continued their retreat towards Besançon almost without molestation; but Werder now moved the whole body of his forces southward, and the utter ruin of Bourbaki's army was more and more apparent at every onward step. The road as far as Rougemont was strewn with broken arms and equipments; dead horses, from which the flesh had been cut for food, lay about here and there; and no fewer than 12,000 fugitives were taken prisoners. The Prussians, as they advanced, restored the bridges over the river Doubs, and the French were unable to prevent the operation. The extreme covering detachment of Bourbaki's forces was under the command of General Castella, who guarded the retreat from Arcy to Clerval with great energy, and fought an unsuccessful action at Pont-aux-Moulins. On the 22nd of January the mass of Bourbaki's army arrived at Besançon, where for a short time they rested.

The Emperor William at once acknowledged the signal services rendered by General Werder and his army. On the 18th he despatched the oak-leaf for the Order of Merit which the general had already received. On the 20th he sent one hundred and fifty Orders of the Iron Cross for distribution among the army, accompanied by the following telegram:—

"Versailles, Jan. 20.

"General von Werder,—Your heroic three days' victorious defence of your position, in the rear of a besieged fortress, is one of the greatest feats of arms in all history.

"I express my royal thanks, my deepest acknowledgments, and bestow upon you the Grand Cross of the Red Eagle, with the sword, as a proof of this acknowledgment.

"Your grateful King,

"WILLIAM."

General Werder, on his part, issued an order of the day, thanking his troops for the courage and endurance which they had exhibited in repulsing the attacks of the enemy. It cannot be questioned that Werder had in these operations given proof of the highest military genius—of abilities that made him a worthy associate of those great generals who had already achieved such brilliant renown in the prosecution of the war, and given to Germany so indisputable a place at the head of Continental Europe. The *Times* Berlin correspondent, speaking of Werder, said:—"To take up the position in which he was to ward off Bourbaki's attack, he had to march some eighty miles in three days. After achieving this pedestrian feat, his 40,000 stood the assault of 140,000 French for another three days. At Héricourt, the key of the position, five German battalions four times received the charge of twenty-three battalions of the enemy, repulsing them each time. The combat is not only remarkable as an extraordinary military exploit, but also as a specimen of the relative efficiency of the two armies when the Germans can afford to stand on the defensive. In nearly all the preceding engagements of the campaign, the Germans attacked, the French defended. In the present instance, the numerical inferiority of the former did not permit of the same tactics. All they could hope to effect was to prevent the enemy from relieving Belfort, and by a short cut pouring into Alsace, and imperilling the very frontiers of Germany. To accomplish this, they chose a strong position on the top and along the slope of a range of hills protected by small rivers in front." But the French proved as unsuccessful in attack as they had formerly done in defence, and the Germans were enabled, after an exhausting series of engagements, to drive back the enemy, and pursue him in headlong flight.

General Manteuffel reached Gray on the 18th of January, in the prosecution of his allotted duty of cutting off the retreat of the French. In the first instance, he sent off a small detachment to keep Garibaldi in check at Dijon, and then, with the bulk of his army, pushed southward to Dôle, lying to the south-west of Besançon. It was on the 21st that he captured Dôle, after a slight encounter; but he did not rest there. Marching on with great rapidity towards the east, his forces crossed the Doubs on the 24th, and seized the defiles along the Swiss frontier, so as, in combination with Werder, to block up every avenue by which Bourbaki and his disorganised levies might hope to escape. While at Dôle, Manteuffel had captured 230 railway wagons loaded with provisions, forage, and clothing; and the loss of these things added greatly to the sufferings of the miserable French. Corps of Manteuffel's army, on the 26th of January, occupied St. Vit, Quingey, and the railway junction at Mouchard, to the south-west of Besançon, thus still further intercepting the retreat of the French. While these arrangements were being effected, Bourbaki lingered for some days irresolutely at Besançon, apparently not knowing what to do. Though one of the bravest and most gallant officers in the French army, and well fitted to act as a general of division—in which capacity he had on several occasions distinguished himself during the Empire—he does not appear to have had the genius for supreme command; and he now entirely lost his coolness and self-possession. At length he gave an order to retreat southwards, though, as an intelligent commentator remarks, his only chances, probably, were to remain where he was, in the hope that the enemy would be compelled to retire from want of supplies, or endeavour to make his way to Garibaldi at Dijon. The retreat became nothing better than a frantic rush of dismayed and desperate men. The horrors of the time have been compared to those of the flight from Moscow in 1812. Cold and hunger reduced the unhappy soldiers to the utmost extremity of wretchedness; and the general terror was soon intensified by the discovery that the Germans were in front, in rear, and on the right flank, and that the beaten and broken army was threatened at almost every point. The roads were covered with sheet-ice, causing the horses to stumble frequently. A third of the troops suffered from frost-bitten feet. Some of the divisions sought shelter among the mountains; others made their way towards Morteau, and thence to Pontarlier. On the 29th, the Germans overtook the French near Arbois, a town to the south-west of Besançon. Sourbacourt and Chaffois were stormed, and 3,000 prisoners and six guns captured. Further fighting ensued on the 30th and 31st of January and the 1st of February. The French seem by this time to have recovered their spirit in some degree; for the final encounters are described as obstinate, especially that which took place with the rear-guard of the flying army at La

Cluse, between Portarlier and the Swiss frontier. The fugitives, however, were again vanquished, driven towards the mountains, and forced to take refuge on Swiss territory. Fifteen thousand prisoners (including two generals), nineteen guns and mitrailleuses, and a large quantity of provisions and arms, fell into the hands of the pursuing force; and some 80,000 men, the shattered wreck of Bourbaki's army, presented themselves before the Swiss authorities, and were at once disarmed.

A tragical circumstance added to the dismay and terror of the French army during the latter days of its retreat. While he was yet tarrying at Besançon, Bourbaki exhibited symptoms of mental derangement; and one day, after he had given the order for retreat, he shot himself in the head. It is said that even before he left Bourges the unfortunate French general had been eccentric in his manner; and it would seem that the excitement, anxiety, and mortification of his reiterated defeats in front of Belfort—combined, probably, with personal suffering from the severity of the weather, and grief at witnessing the still greater trials of his men—overthrew his reason, and left him at the mercy of the first wild impulse by which he might be visited. The self-inflicted wound was serious, but the general ultimately recovered. After this sad event, the command of the French Army of the East devolved on General Clinchamp.

The detachment of his army which General Manteuffel sent to keep the Garibaldians in check at Dijon was not successful. On the 21st of January, a Prussian column made an offensive movement above Darvis at seven o'clock in the morning. The Garibaldians retreated, in order to lead the enemy under the fire of some batteries posted at Talant and Fontaine-les-Dijon; and at the close of the day the position of Hauteville, occupied by the Prussians, was taken from them. Fighting continued in a desultory way during the night, and was resumed on a larger scale the following morning. The Prussians made repeated attempts to take Fontaine-les-Dijon and Talant, but without success. Overpowered by a heavy artillery and rifle fire, the assailants were compelled to fall back, with considerable loss. Their positions were carried one after another, and they themselves, according to a French account, fled in disorder. Garibaldi commanded in person, and at five in the evening returned to Dijon amidst the ovations of the people. On the 23rd he issued the following proclamation:—

"Dijon, Jan. 23, 1871.

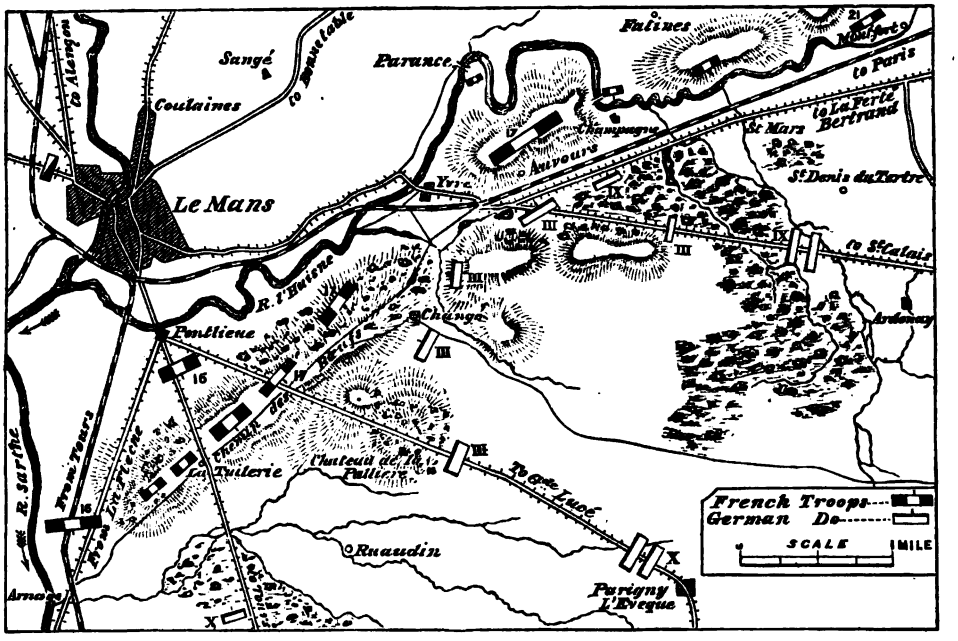
"To the brave men of the Army of the Vosges.—Well, you have again seen the heels of the terrible soldiers of William, young sons of liberty! In two days of sanguinary combats, you have written a glorious page for the annals of the Republic; and the oppressed of the great human family will salute in you once more the champions of right and justice. You have conquered the best-trained veterans in the world, notwithstanding that you have not altogether fulfilled the rules which secure advantage in battle. The new arms of precision demand more vigorous tactics in line of skirmishers. You crowd together too much; you do not sufficiently profit by the accidents of the ground, and you do not preserve that coolness which is indispensable in presence of the enemy, so that you always make but few prisoners, and you have many wounded, while the enemy, more astute than you, maintains, despite your bravery, a superiority which he ought not to have. The conduct of the officers towards the soldiers leaves much to be desired: with very few exceptions, the officers do not occupy themselves sufficiently with the instruction of the soldiers, with their cleanliness, with the good condition of their arms, and, lastly, with their conduct towards the inhabitants, who are useful to us, and whom we ought to consider as brothers. Finally, be as diligent and affectionate among yourselves as you are brave; gain the love of the population, whose defence and support you are; and we shall soon shake to pieces the bloody and worm-eaten throne of despotism, and shall found on the hospitable soil of our fair France the sacred pact of the fraternity of nations.

"G. GARIBALDI.

"BORDONE, Head of the Staff."

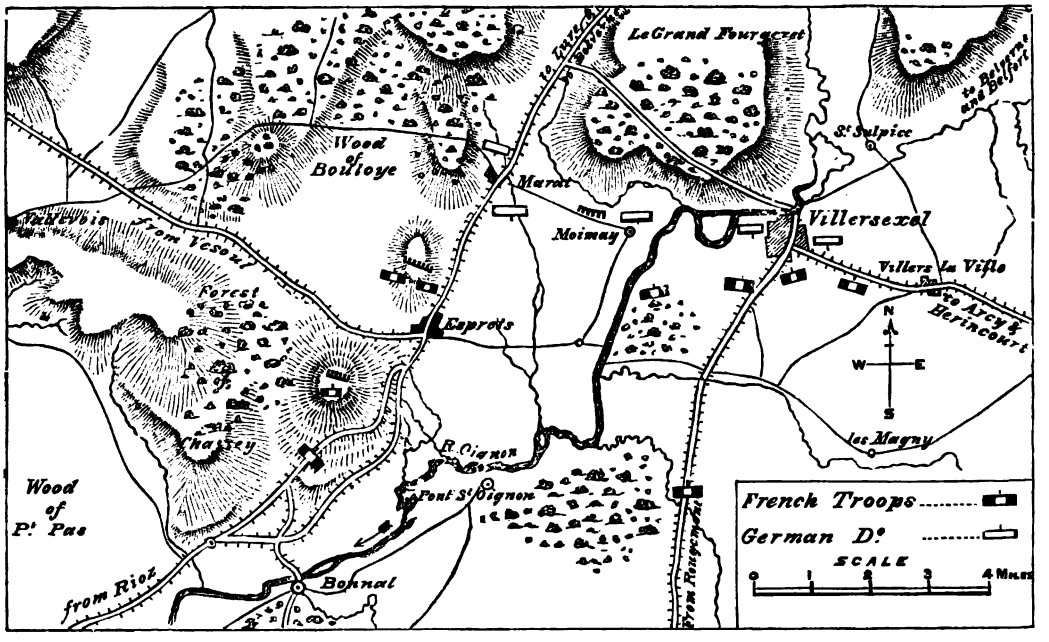
Some other engagements, of less consequence, also took place, in all of which Garibaldi gave a good account of the enemy; yet his success was less than he supposed, for, while he imagined that he was intercepting all the reinforcements on their way to Werder, and thus enabling the French to advance on Belfort, the bulk of Manteuffel's troops was placing itself in the rear of Bourbaki, who was already flying fast with his discomfited regiments.

The siege of Belfort continued uninterruptedly during these desperate endeavours to cause its abandonment. Belfort, like Metz, was an entrenched camp, as well as a fortress. The investing corps was at first numerically weak in proportion to the strength of the place that was being assailed; but reinforcements were gradually sent to the spot. The command was in the hands of a Prussian officer, General Treskow; and the army consisted for the most part of Prussian divisions, with which were combined some from South Germany. So large was the first, or inner, line of investment—that of the outposts—that it described a circle of from fifteen to eighteen miles, and included a considerable number of villages. The second line of investment was formed of the bulk of the army, and it made a circle of nearly thirty miles. In



BATTLE OF LE MANS (I), 11TH JANUARY,

Between the Crown Prince and General Chanzy, 6 A.M. The French retain their positions all along the line, losing but regaining the plateau of Anvours.



BATTLE OF VILLERSEXEL, 9TH JANUARY.

The Prussians, retreating from Vesoul on Belfort, take up the position between Marat and Villersexel. The French, from Rougemont and Riot, attack, obliging the Germans to evacuate Marat, but endeavour in vain to force them from Moimay and Villersexel.

the outpost (that is to say, the inner) circle, the siege artillery was placed. Both lines were secured by the *étappen* route, which was about forty-eight miles long, and consisted chiefly of communal and departmental roads. The distances and extent of the siege-lines involved great difficulties in the victualling of the troops, and in the transport of the guns and ammunition. These troubles were aggravated by the communication between Mulhausen and La Chapelle being only partially carried



PARTY OF FRENCH PRISONERS.

on by railway. In spite, however, of all disadvantages, and of the advance of Bourbaki's army, the siege went steadily on, and on the night of the 8th of January the village of Danjustin was stormed and taken by the Germans, on which occasion the French, besides losing an important position, left two Staff and sixteen other officers, and 700 men, in the hands of the Prussians. Entrenched positions were subsequently wrested from the French, and the parallels pushed nearer. After the defeat of Bourbaki, the siege of Belfort went on with augmented vigour; but it was not until the 16th of February—just ten days before the signing of the preliminaries of peace—that the fortress capitulated.

The corps which Bourbaki left at Bourges, under General Le Comte, moved towards the Loire, west of Orleans, and for the third time dislodged the Prussians from Gien, compelling them to retreat towards the north. This action, which took place about the middle of January, helped to console the French for their numerous defeats; but it could do nothing to prevent, or even delay, the crisis that was now inevitably coming on.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Bombardment of the Parisian Eastern Forts—Previous Sieges of Paris—Silence of some of the Forts on January 1st—Terrific Fire on the 3rd—Effect on the Population of the Capital—Increased Death-rate in the City—Results of the Bombardment of the Eastern Forts—A Visit to Fort Rosny—Small Number of Persons wounded—Bombs falling in the Streets of Paris—Attack on the Southern Forts—German and French Shells—Civilians killed—Bombardment of the City—Alleged Firing at Hospitals, Churches, &c.—Protests of the French Government, and Denial of the Prussians—Probabilities of the Case—Progress of the Bombardment—Unpopularity of General Trochu—Comments of the Parisian Press—Red Republican Placards—Policy of the Government—Trochu's Distrust of Newly-raised Levies—Deserters from the Army of Paris—Heinrich Heine on the Fortifications of Paris—Skirmishes in front of the Forts—Want of Heavy Guns on the Part of the Prussians—General Character of the German Fire—Catastrophes in Paris—Condition of the City—Stores of Fuel and Food—High Prices—The Morals of War.

WHEN the New Year opened, the eastern forts of Paris were in the midst of a fiery bombardment. The attack which had commenced on December 27th, and which by the end of 1870 had resulted in the capture of Mont Avron, and in a certain amount of damage done to several other works, was being prosecuted with great vigour, and the people of Paris at length had reason to fear that their very dwellings would soon be visited by the deadly rain. The Germans had long hesitated to attack the city; or, to speak more correctly, Moltke was opposed to this measure, while Bismarck supported it—a difference which led to the entire exclusion of the latter from the military deliberations of the Cabinet. Moltke alleged that such a proceeding would cost the besieging army a thousand men a day. Bismarck entirely discredited the calculation, and argued that even if it did the result would be cheaply earned, in comparison with the cost of prolonging the war. In the end, the military leader was converted by the political; and Paris was now about to taste the horrors of a bombardment. At the same time, the advent of downright famine grew daily more visible, and outside observers began to search for historical parallels to the approaching condition of the great city. A German paper pleased itself by the thought that the reduction of the French capital by hunger would be no new phenomenon in history, and that De Thou had given some fearful details of the sufferings of the people in 1590, during the siege conducted by Henry IV. The army on that occasion was at last obliged to subsist on leaves, or on roots dug up from between the stones. All the dogs had been eaten; bread was no longer to be had; saucepans stood in the public squares, and at the corners of streets, in which oatmeal gruel was prepared; and 12,000 persons died in three months of the diseases resulting from deprivation. The Berlin correspondent of the *Times* carried his historical researches back to the age of Julius Cæsar, fifty years B.C., and forward to the close of the first Napoleonic era in 1815, to show that no city had so often provoked and undergone attack as Paris. It should be remarked that many of the sieges alluded to by this writer were not "provoked" by the unhappy citizens, and must be set down rather to their misfortunes than to their wrong-doings. These examples, however, served to soften the horror of the approaching bombardment to bystanders, as seeming to show that Paris was a city of peculiar wickedness, for which the severest visitations of heaven were justly reserved. Whether any such ideas occurred to the Parisians themselves,

or yielded them much comfort if they did, may fairly be doubted.

The first moment of 1871 was ushered in by a thundering salute from the French gunners in Mont Valérien. During the whole of the ensuing day, however, Forts Nogent, Rosny, and Noisy were quite silent. The guns were withdrawn, and the embrasures blinded. This unexpected state of things filled the German commanders at Versailles with wonder, and, suspecting some design which they were not able to penetrate, they were for a time in great perplexity. It was thought that there might perhaps be a project to lure the besiegers on until they were brought within range of concealed mines, which would then be sprung beneath them. But nothing was known, and it would have been rash under the circumstances to venture on an experimental advance. On the 2nd the forts fired very little; but the German batteries continued to pour a terrific fire on the outer defences of Paris, and on the 3rd only Fort Nogent replied, and that but feebly. A correspondent of the *Times*, writing on the same day, said that from early dawn till long past sunset not a minute elapsed without the thunder of 24-pounders, and the rush and explosion of numerous projectiles, rending the air. The earth shook as if disturbed by never-ceasing shocks of earthquake. The German gunners were firing on three forts, and on some half-dozen small towns gathered about the great metropolis, from which it was their object to drive out the French garrisons, and to deprive them of shelter, should they seek to return. Before such a tremendous cannonade many private houses were of course swept away; but the inhabitants of the villages had already fled. The batteries then being worked were not intended for Paris itself; but the roar of the guns was of course heard by the citizens within their girdle of fortifications, and it appears to have had an effect the very contrary of that which had been anticipated. By the Germans it was supposed, not unreasonably, that the terror of a bombardment, acting on a population already reduced by famine, sickness, and the depression of long-continued ill-success, would enforce a speedy surrender. As yet, however, it was only the external forts that were being bombarded, and the Parisians seemed to be rather exhilarated than discouraged by the new phase on which the siege had entered. They argued that it was a sign of disquietude and impatience on the part of the Prussians. The investment had lasted longer than they expected; they wanted to bring it to a conclusion; it was even necessary to them that they should do so at once; with a little longer delay they would be obliged to raise the siege.

In this hopeful spirit the volatile population of the French metropolis regarded the commencement of the final act of their tragedy. They had need of all their cheerfulness, for the circumstances by which they were surrounded were of the most mournful description. The deaths in the city continued to increase rapidly and alarmingly; and from 2,728 in the week ending December 17th—itself an increase of 273 on the preceding week—they had risen to 3,280 in the week ending December 31st. Small-pox, typhoid fever, bronchitis, and pneumonia, were particularly deadly in their operation; and to the deaths occurring in private houses, which were alone included in the weekly returns, were to be added those taking place in hospitals, ordinary and military, which were only registered once a quarter. A writer from Paris calculated that, as hospital fever was then raging, and the mortality from surgical cases was enormous, the total mortality in Paris during that particular week could not have been less than 4,000. If continued throughout the year, this, it was calculated, would have given, relatively to the two millions and a few odd thousands contained in the city, a death-rate of ten per cent.; whereas, in England, a district is considered very unhealthy if the death-rate reaches five per cent. per annum. It was remarkable, however, that the deaths in Paris from diseases of the alimentary system were not extreme—a fact doubtless to be attributed to the compulsory absence of excess in eating and drinking. Nothing contributed to the appalling death-rate so much as the extreme cold which prevailed through a large part of December and January. So low a temperature for so long a time had not been known for many years. Another depressing influence was the absence of news from without. When the desire for information became intolerable, a party of officers and soldiers would go and surprise an outpost, seize such baggage as they could find, and distribute whatever newspapers it might contain. On one of these occasions ten Prussians were killed, and six made prisoners. Such was the cost of news in Paris at the beginning of 1871.

The bombardment of the eastern forts, however effective in silencing them for the time, produced very few results in the way of killing the gunners stationed there. The Prussians threw 600 shells into Fort Nogent on the 2nd of January; yet the only mischief done was that one man was slightly wounded, and that a few stones, bricks, and sacks of earth were displaced. It was calculated in Paris, that from the 27th of December to the 1st of January 25,000 projectiles were launched

against Forts Noisy, Rosny, and Nogent. Yet even two days later only thirty men had been killed and a hundred wounded, and the walls had not been seriously injured. "It could scarcely be otherwise," wrote a Paris correspondent of the *Daily News* on the 6th of January, "considering the distance of the Prussian batteries on that side. They are established at Raincy, Gagny, and Noisy-le-Grand. The batteries at Raincy, the most powerful of any, are 4,000 mètres from the fort of Rosny, 5,300 from that of Noisy, 6,000 from that of Nogent. The other batteries are still more distant. At these ranges, the most powerful projectiles have but a feeble effect on the works; and there is such a lapse of time between the flash of the gun and the arrival of the missile, that men have plenty of time to get under cover." This account was confirmed by that of one of the *Times* correspondents, who visited the interior of Fort Rosny on January 2nd, in company with a friend. While watching the construction of a new battery in the neighbourhood of the fort, these two gentlemen were arrested as spies. They told the guard on duty at the fort that they had come there to meet, or await the arrival of, Monseigneur Bauer, Archbishop of Syracuse, and chaplain of the Ambulance of the Press; and in this way they got in. They perceived the ground within the works strewn with fragments of shells, with here and there one which had fallen without bursting; but there was no evidence of serious damage. Monseigneur Bauer was well known at the fort, and a popular guest there; so the two English gentlemen, on mentioning his name, were well received. The casemate into which they were shown was a low, long room, with a rounded roof, and small beds down both sides of it, but without any window or embrasure to admit light, as that might have exposed the inmates to danger from shells. The only loss of life at the fort during the bombardment had been when a shell happened to strike on an opening not sufficiently protected, and, falling among a number of National Guards, killed two, and severely wounded three. "It had an odd effect," said a correspondent, "to hear them bursting now and then in the yard outside, and contrast their noise and fury with the peaceful quiet that reigned in the casemate. Two of the officers were seated at a table writing by the light of a lamp; others were lying on the beds; a few formed a group round the stove, smoking and chatting. I tried hard to find out why so terrific a bombardment caused so little loss of life, but could not get an altogether satisfactory explanation. The casemates to a great extent accounted for the fact—their occupants might live under a bombardment as long as annuitants in a country town. Then, as for the men constantly in movement about the yard, taking orders or otherwise employed, they are of course more or less exposed; but, from what we ourselves saw, the danger they run is not, after all, very great, if they will only take proper precautions. When they are touched, it is more often than not because they are lounging about from carelessness or bravado in places where there is no sort of shelter close at hand, or because, grown callous from constant escapes, they won't take proper care to look out for the shells. But what I could not understand was how the men who worked the guns escaped. The guns naturally draw most of the fire of the enemy, which was astonishingly good. I had myself watched shell after shell fall in rapid succession, almost, it seemed, on the very spot where half a dozen sailors, their heads and shoulders clearly visible above the ramparts, were answering the enemy's fire." Yet only four or five of the gunners had been struck, and of these not more than two were mortally wounded. The general opinion in the fort was that a bombardment, though it made a good deal of noise, and seemed very frightful to the uninitiated, did in fact but little harm. This, however, could only be true of buildings specially made to encounter such visitations. Bombs falling on the fragile roofs of ordinary houses, or exploding against windows, are enemies of a very terrific nature.

Occasionally, some of these shells fell within Paris itself—sent there, possibly, as a warning of what the city might expect when the bombardment was extended to its streets and squares, its public buildings and private dwellings. A correspondent on the spot said that "when the Parisians recovered their first shock of surprise at the bombardment, they regarded it very much as they would an exhibition of fireworks. They gathered to every high place and coign of vantage where they could see the pyrotechnical display, and watched with curious interest for every flash and every explosion. With a difference, however. Whenever a bomb came suspiciously near, they fell flat on their faces with a ludicrous unanimity. The Parisians are wonderfully obedient to rules and recipes. For every situation in life they have a recipe. And as they have been informed that when a shell bursts upon them the best chance of escape is to fall flat upon their bellies, down they go whenever there appears the slightest symptom of danger. Nothing can be more laughable. You hear, or you fancy that you hear, a whizz in the air. Instantly the Parisians—men and women—pick out the cleanest places, and sprawl on the ground with an alacrity which

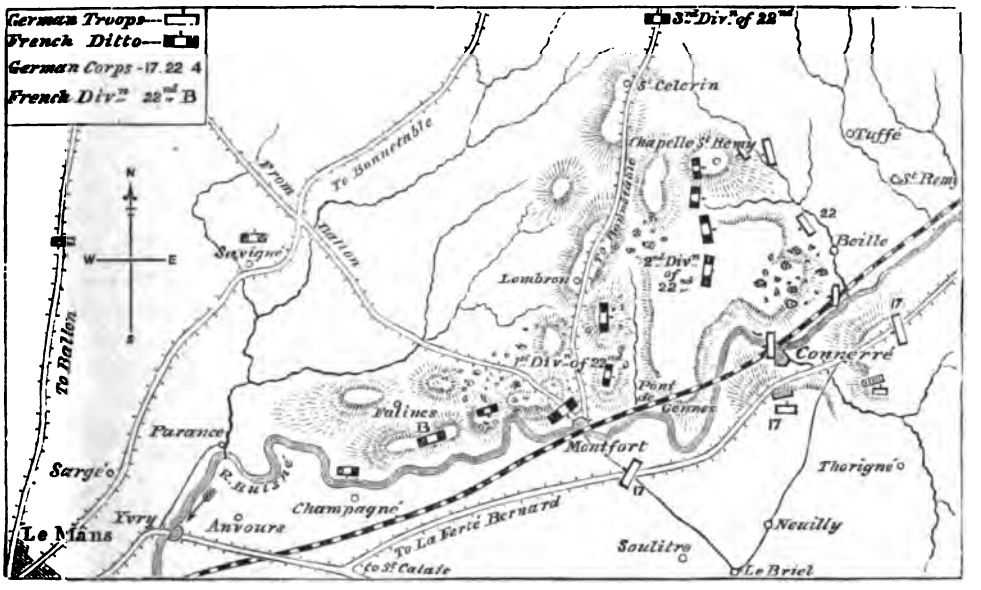
will no doubt be most effectively reproduced in the comedies, farces, and burlesques of many years to come." The bombardment of the southern forts of Issy, Vanvres, and Montrouge, with the entrenchments of Villejuif and Pont du Jour, began on the 5th of January. The effect, according to accounts from Versailles, was tremendous; but there seems to have been some exaggeration in these statements. Every now and then, the French forts would cease to reply; but this was only for a time, and on the whole the French fire was formidable, though not equally so with that of the Germans. As in the case of Avron, the batteries of the assailants had been concealed behind trees until the last moment. The trees were felled on the night between the 4th and 5th of January, and with the morning light the guns stood revealed to the French, planted in very awkward positions. The superiority of the German fire over the French was said to be owing to the better construction of the shells used by the besiegers, as compared with those employed by the besieged. The former were described as being moulded into deep grooves to hold the leaden coating for the rifled barrel of the gun, as a consequence of which they burst into many fragments, each capable of killing a man; while the latter were furnished with knobs or buttons to fit the rifling of the gun, and, not being grooved, flew into fewer pieces. Moreover, the French guns worked for the most part in embrasures large enough to give admission to a shell, which in that case would be likely to silence the gun; but the German guns were better protected by the breastwork. The latter were breech-loaders, and could be loaded with the smallest possible amount of exposure to the artillerymen in the batteries.

On the 5th of January—the one hundred and tenth day of the siege—several persons in the streets of Paris were killed and wounded by shells falling there. Explosives dropped in the cemetery of Mont Parnasse, the garden of the Luxembourg, the Rue Gay-Lussac, and all the adjacent quarters. A little girl coming out of school was cut in two by one; another killed a woman who was drawing a hand-cart; a third wounded a baby in its cradle; and others inflicted injuries on various men, besides damaging a number of houses. The Paris correspondent of the *Morning Post*, in mentioning these facts, denied the possibility of the shells having fallen in the city through accident. The Prussian batteries directed against the southern forts were ranged, he remarked, on the heights from Meudon, by Clamart and Châtillon, to Fontenay-aux-Roses. The forts lay in the low ground immediately under those heights, which looked sheer down into them at an average distance of 1,800 yards. The walls of Paris were another 2,000 yards beyond the forts; and it was therefore, in the opinion of this gentleman, impossible that any projectiles intended only for the Parisian forts should fall in the city, and even a distance of 2,000 yards within its environment. The Parisians, however, as we have seen, soon got accustomed to the sight of the shells dropping about, and even ran to look at them as a curiosity. When it was reported that one had fallen in the Luxembourg garden, the place was thronged with men, women, and children, who, however, all fell flat on their faces whenever a hissing sound in the air betokened the coming of another of these flying instruments of death. Then, when a shell burst a little way off, there was a rush to pick up the fragments, and the street boys sold them at prices varying from three to ten francs each. During the greater part of the night of January 5th, the bombardment of the southern forts continued, and several persons were killed in Paris and the surrounding villages. The practice was evidently getting warm; yet the moral effect on which the Prussians had calculated was not produced. The Parisians were as little inclined as ever to yield their city into the hands of the enemy.

That the shells falling in Paris were really intended for that destination is proved by a passage in one of Dr. Russell's letters from Versailles, dated January 8th, in which it is said:—"The siege has now begun. The bombardment of the city of Paris is a reality. The King of Prussia, under a sense of duty to his army and to Germany, has ordered his batteries to aim at the capital itself." The Parisians complained bitterly, but not unjustly, of the German military authorities having omitted, in defiance of the custom in such matters, to give any previous notice of their intention to shell the city. The usual summons to surrender ought surely to have been sent to the military authorities of Paris; for it is no light matter to bombard a vast city of more than two million inhabitants, of whom a large number are necessarily women, children, old people, and invalids. Dr. Russell (a witness strongly disposed to the Prussian side) said, in the letter just quoted, that orders had been given to throw into Paris a certain number of fire-shells —"a kind of carcase filled with inflammable matter;" as a consequence of which, apparently, some smouldering fires had been observed in the city. Another complaint made by the Parisians was that the German bombs appeared to have been purposely directed against buildings which, by the commonest principles of humanity and decency, should have been held sacred. On the 9th of

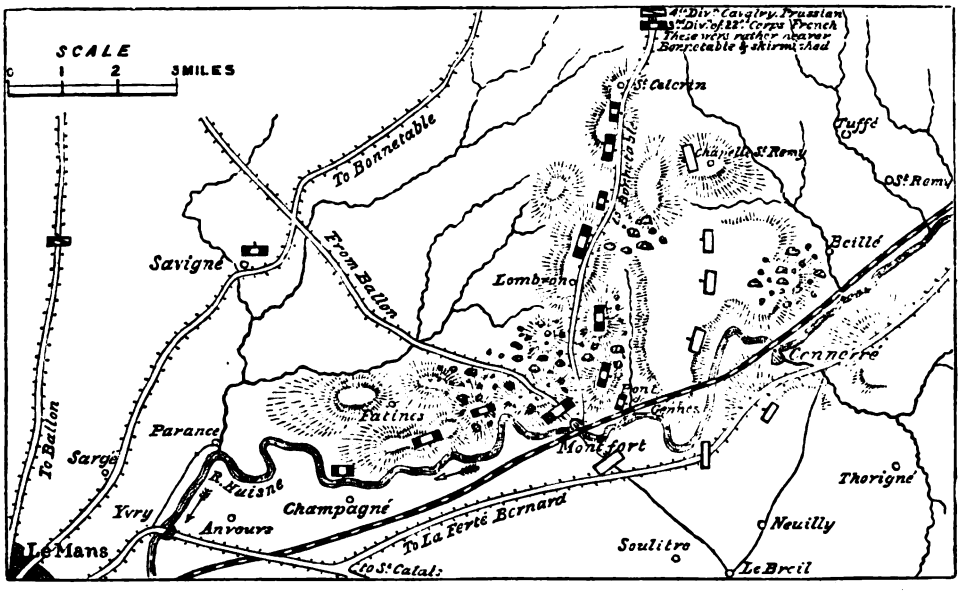


GERMANS SERVING OUT FOOD.



BATTLE OF LE MANS (1), 11TH JANUARY, 1871, 12 NOON.

Between the Army of the Duke of Mecklenburg and the 22nd Corps and Brittany Division of the Army of General Chanzy. The 3rd Division of the 22nd French Corps is nearer Bonnetable.



BATTLE OF LE MANS (2), 11TH JANUARY, 1871, 8 P.M.

The French hold their ground on the right, and repulse an attack on Pont de Gennes. They are compelled to retire from Chapelle St. Remy to Lombron and St. Celerin. The 3rd Division and 4th Prussian Cavalry Corps have but a slight engagement.

January, the Minister of Foreign Affairs sent to the French diplomatic agents abroad (with a view to its ultimate submittal to the different European Cabinets) a protest of the Government of the National Defence against the bombardment of Paris without previous warning; and in this document it was said :—

"Prussian shells appear to have been wantonly launched against hospitals, ambulances, churches, schools, and prisons, making numerous innocent

females and children their victims. No means had been afforded them to provide for this unexpected aggravation of suffering. The exigencies of war can never be an excuse for the shelling of private buildings, the massacre of peaceful citizens, and the destruction of refuges and hospitals. Suffering and weakness always find mercy at the hands of force; if force is not disarmed by them, it is dishonoured. The besieger is bound to announce beforehand his intention to bombard, in order to give time for non-combatants, women, and children to be removed. There was no necessity for a bombardment without previous notice. The military action now taken is a calmly premeditated destruction, and is being systematically carried out, with no other end than to inspire the civil population with terror by means of arson and murder.

"The Government of the National Defence protests loudly, in the face of the whole world, against this useless act of barbarism, and heartily shares the indignant sentiments of the inhabitants, who, far from being depressed by this violence, derive strength from it to repel the disgrace of foreign invasion."

The doctors of the public hospitals also signed a protest against the bombardment of those institutions, as a violation of the Geneva Convention; and General Trochu, on the 11th of January, endeavoured to send a declaration on the subject to Count Moltke. Five hospitals, including the one for sick children, were here enumerated as among the buildings struck by the bombs. "The precision of the artillery fire," remarked Trochu, "and the persistency with which the projectiles fall in the same direction, and at the same angle, make it impossible that the shells which strike children, females, and incurables in hospitals, the wounded and the sick who are shut up in them, could penetrate there by mere accident. The Governor therefore solemnly declares to General Count Moltke, Chief of the Staff of the German Armies, that not one of the hospitals of Paris has been alienated from its original destination. He is convinced that, in conformity with the text of international conventions and with the laws of morality and humanity, orders will be issued by the Prussian military authorities to ensure to these asylums the respect due to them under the flags displayed on their domes." It was stated in a despatch from Paris that Captain d'Hérison, of the Head-quarters Staff, carrying this declaration, presented himself at the bridge of Sèvres at mid-day, under a flag of truce, which was likewise displayed by the Prussians, but that nevertheless no Prussian officer advanced, and the battery at Breteuil did not cease firing. The captain caused his trumpeter to repeat several times the call to cease firing; but it was not heeded, and, shortly afterwards, finding themselves aimed at, they were obliged to return, without having accomplished their purpose.

Four days later, General Trochu succeeded in conveying this protest to Count Moltke, who replied by an expression of regret that such things should have happened, accompanied by an excuse or explanation which probably did not meet with much credence in Paris. He said that the fog, and the distance of the batteries, prevented the gunners taking better aim, and that when the German batteries had been established nearer the city, they would be able to fire with more discrimination. The subject was incidentally alluded to by Count Bismarck in a despatch dated January 17th, and addressed to Dr. Kern, the Swiss Minister in Paris, in answer to a request of the representatives of various foreign States that their countrymen should now be allowed to leave Paris. In refusing to grant this prayer, the Count collaterally glanced at the effects of the bombardment, and observed that of course buildings in which there were women, children, and invalids were not intentionally fired at, but that, from the construction of the fortresses and the great distance of the German batteries, the damage which was accidentally inflicted could not be avoided. He also maintained that neither law nor custom obliged a beleaguering force to give notice of operations which it intended to carry out; that people ought to have been prepared to see Paris bombarded if it prolonged its resistance; that no right or justifiable pretext could be urged against the course the Germans had pursued; and that for months neutrals had had the option of leaving the city. As regards the Count's assertion that the Germans were not obliged to give notice of their resort to a bombardment of Paris itself, it may be remarked that it is certainly unusual, as it is obviously unfair and inhumane, to omit giving the besieged an opportunity of surrendering before opening fire on a large civilian population. The denial of the charge of having purposely shelled hospitals, schools, and churches, is one of those self-vindications which, for the sake of their common nature, all men are anxious to believe; yet there are facts in the present case which render credence difficult. On this point, the testimony of Dr. Russell may again be cited. In the letter twice before referred to, that gentleman wrote:—"I am informed that a special fire is likely to be directed against the Invalides, the dome and front of which form very conspicuous marks in the landscape of Paris as seen from the plateau of Meudon. *This information comes from Prussian officers.* The feeling of the army is, I am assured, in favour of *the very strongest measures* that can be employed

against the refractory Parisians." The methods of warfare avowedly followed by the Prussians throughout the campaign give only too much support to the statement here made by a chronicler who was certainly very favourable to the German character and cause.

The deaths in the streets of Paris increasing, the Government, on the 12th of January, issued a decree announcing that French citizens struck by Prussian shells would be regarded as soldiers who had been killed in front of the enemy, and that the families of the victims would be dealt with in the same way as those of soldiers slain in action. In Paris it was estimated—after the bombardment of the southern forts had been added to that of the eastern—that 20,000 shells were sent forth daily by the Prussians, of which four or five hundred fell within the *enceinte* of the city, principally at Montrouge, Vaugirard, Grenelle, Auteuil, and Point du Jour. "These shells," said an account from the beleaguered city, dated the 8th, "are 22 centimètres in diameter, 55 centimètres long, and weigh 80 kilogrammes. The farthest points reached by them are the Rue Doufflot, Rue Vanneau, and the avenue of Breteuil, near the Hôtel des Invalides. The effects produced by them are not in any way commensurate with the enormous dimensions of the enemy's projectiles, notwithstanding the profuseness with which they are used by the Prussian army. The fort of Nogent, which has received in its interior 10,000 shells (within 200 or 300, a marine having been told off specially to count them), has none killed and only two wounded. The number of shells which fell within the approaches to the fort may be estimated at from 20,000 to 25,000. In the interior of Fort Vanvres, about 6,000 shells have struck since the 5th, and outside from 10,000 to 12,000. Still, only four were killed and ten wounded in this fort. The total loss in our different forts and redoubts since the 5th does not amount to more than fifteen killed and sixty wounded. The damage done to the forts is trifling, and easily repaired during the night." The authorities issued a proclamation recommending the inhabitants not to collect in public places where the projectiles were most likely to fall; but the casualties in the streets continued to be numerous. A good deal of bravado was shown by many of the citizens, and some people seemed to consider it a point of honour to remain in their houses, even when those were situated in very exposed localities. In the meanwhile, the Paris forts continued to reply vigorously to the Prussian fire. Although frequently silenced towards the close of the day, they were always ready to begin again on the following morning. New guns had been mounted, new *gabionnades* run up, and rents in the masonry roughly repaired. The Germans established rifle-pits on the flank of the French *enceinte* works; but the results were not encouraging. Each successive morning, the moment the French opened fire, the Prussian gunners stood to their pieces, and began a terrific cannonade. The interchange of projectiles would then go on throughout the greater part of the day; but the high ground on which the German batteries were placed, enabled them to send a plunging fire into the forts, which generally resulted in disabling the latter for a time. The French, however, often did great mischief in return; and when their fire was more than usually hot, the German artillerymen were forced to retreat from their guns, and get under shelter.

Although the Parisians were not struck with dismay at the opening of the bombardment, or reduced at once to the mood of submission, it was seen by many that a grave crisis was at hand, if nothing could be done to change the aspect of affairs; and the independent journals of Paris expressed great dissatisfaction with the military policy pursued by the Government. The *Siècle* strongly condemned the conduct of General Trochu in commuting the capital sentences pronounced against deserters, in abstaining from prosecuting generals who had failed in their duty, and in not ordering more sorties. The *Patrie* remarked that everybody would be better pleased to have one Plateau d'Avron more, and one proclamation less. The *Rappel*—the organ of the Rochefort party—declared that the confidence which the Parisians had felt in their leaders was now daily diminishing. The evacuation of Bourget had caused the first revulsion, which had just been completed by the abandonment of Avron. It had been officially stated that the bombardment was about to transform the conditions of the defence; but the *Rappel* was of opinion that if this did not lead to a fundamental change, incapacity would not be the sole charge brought against the Government. Many other papers—indeed, pretty nearly all—wrote in the same strain, and the popular impatience grew greater with each day. The *Avenir National* put the case strongly and truthfully when it said:—"What the public now demands is a steady idea and energetic action. But how can the public believe in any fixed idea when it sees that each event as it occurs troubles the minds of our generals, and obliges them, in the official phrase, to modify their system of defence? Sometimes it is the rise of the Marne which disconcerts a plan that had been long and carefully elaborated; at another time it is the loop-holed walls of Bourget which constitute an 'un-

foreseen accident' rendering useless the affair of December 21st; or, again, it is the fall in the temperature, which, preventing the opening of trenches that no one thought of making at a propitious time, has arrested our offensive efforts. Now we are told it is the Krupp guns which, unexpectedly developing themselves, have modified the system of defence. All this is very lamentable, and we say so loyally to the Government and to General Trochu. The confidence of the public is shaken. No one doubts the honesty of General Trochu, or his disinterestedness, or his ardent desire to conquer; but since the beginning of the siege we have seen nothing but unfortunate enterprises, occasionally ill-executed. We see day after day pass without the enemy having been compelled to yield even an inch of ground. We see the most trivial military incidents, such as might most easily have been foreseen, becoming insurmountable obstacles to the realisation of General Trochu's plan; and we ask ourselves, 'Whither are we going?'" People in the streets denounced Trochu as an imbecile and a traitor, worse than Bazaine, and accused him of conspiring for the installation of the Comte de Paris as King of France, and as the instrument or creature of the German monarch. This feeling was as prevalent among the soldiers as among the civilians, and was especially observable in the ranks of the National Guards. The Red Republicans took advantage of the general discontent to bring forward once more their pet project of the Commune. They accordingly, on the 6th of January, covered the walls of Paris with placards printed on red paper, accusing the Government of a degree of incapacity which could only lead to surrender. The respectable part of the populace, however, who always dreaded the Commune, tore down the placards; and Trochu issued a short proclamation, which ran:—"At a time when the enemy is redoubling his efforts at intimidation, an endeavour is made to lead the citizens of Paris astray by deceit and calumny. Our sufferings and our sacrifices are being turned to advantage against the defence. Nothing will make us lay down our arms. The Governor of Paris will not capitulate." The *Official Journal* of the following day referred to the same circumstance, observing that certain clubs had increased their insults and menaces, as if to strengthen the enemy's hands. The placard in question was described as an incitement of the citizens to civil war. These criminal designs, however, it was added, had excited the indignation and contempt of the population; and the ringleaders, having been arrested, would be brought to court-martial, according to law.

It is said that the opposition to vigorous measures came chiefly from Trochu, and in particular met with the disapprobation of M. Jules Favre and M. Picard. The general ultimately consented to associate with himself, in connection with the conduct of the siege, a Council consisting of four ministers and four military officers of high standing; but it was at the same time stipulated that the functions of this Council should be only consultative. Up to that time—about the commencement of January—Trochu had acted by himself in all military arrangements. He was now desirous of somewhat lightening his responsibility, while at the same time retaining substantial power in his own hands.

The demand for incessant sorties was very natural under the circumstances, and it does assuredly seem strange that, after so many months for organising and perfecting his army, Trochu should not have been able to do more against the enemy. But he was always distrustful of his troops, fearing lest the raw and inexperienced recruits of the Republic should ruin any movement on a large scale, such as only veterans might be expected to perform. It is a noteworthy fact that in his book on the reorganisation of the army, published some years before, the general specially referred to this very subject of the unreliability of hastily-raised levies. He there remarks, in some passages quoted by the Vienna *Presse* in the early part of 1871:—"There exists a prejudice, cherished by the multitude, which prevails especially among the French traditions—viz., the importance and value to be attached to that particular temper of an army which is called 'enthusiasm.' What tales have not been told of the enthusiam of the first army which the Revolution collected, and which under Dumouriez repulsed the Prussian and Austrian coalition which was attacking our territory! And what deeds have not been attributed to it in the pictures of those days, as painted by history, with regard to the military success which vanquished the coalition! The truth, which the commander did not conceal from himself, and which Field-Marshal Gouvion St. Cyr, who took part in all the campaigns of the Rhine and Moselle, describes with great authority and many interesting details, was that that portion of the troops which particularly represented the enthusiasm of the army was always—at Valmy, Jemappes, and Neerwinden—a hindrance, and an obstacle to the skilful operations of Dumouriez." After mentioning as further illustrations the defeats of the Scotch Jacobites in 1715 and 1745, and of the Vendéans after the Revolution, General Trochu continues:—"The enthusiasm of armed masses ge-

nerates what Field-Marshal Bugeaud called the 'ardour of departure,' a temporary fervour which is not able to withstand the heavy fatigues and the frequently overpowering influence of a change of climate, and of long-continued mental exertion; still less the influence of reverses. An unavoidable and dangerous reaction consequently ensues; lukewarmness—particularly with the impulsive and easily-influenced disposition of the French—assumes its place; and this soon becomes pusillanimity, if the fortune of war takes an unfavourable turn." The Duke of Wellington put the same truth very pithily when he said, "Enthusiasm runs away." It is the peculiar weakness of the Celtic and Latin races to be unduly influenced by these fiery impulses, which so often end in depression and collapse. In France, this tendency has been more particularly developed by the Revolutionary party, with its love of declamation, of unreality, and of theatrical pretence; but it must be added that, as a rule, French generals of *all* parties have encouraged the same vice by their turgid and bombastic proclamations. A French soldier is taught to believe that he has nothing to do but to advance against the enemy, to the favourite (or permitted) cry of the hour, and whole armies will scatter before him, almost without firing a shot.

That there were some bad elements in the army is shown by a painful fact occurring at the very period now being described. On the 8th of January, some French officers and men deserted their posts on the Parisian side of the Seine, and, crossing the river in a boat, delivered themselves up to the Fourth German Army Corps at Argenteuil. The occupants of the boat waved their pocket-handkerchiefs on setting out, as a sign that they were deserting; and the boat afterwards returned for another set of renegades. It would appear from a subsequent proclamation of General Trochu that the number of these men was eight. The proclamation ran:—

"Soldiers!—Yesterday, an event occurred at the bridge of Argenteuil which will arouse among you the deepest indignation. Two officers of the 2nd Battalion of the Mobile Guards of the Côte du Nord (Lieutenant de Merdy and Sub-Lieutenant Le Vezonet), Sergeant Cocard, Corporal Troardes, of the Mobile Guards, Outol, Guillot, and Carré, and, lastly, Sub-Lieutenant Grenard, of the Eclaireurs of the National Guards, exchanged communications with the enemy by means of a boat which had been purposely procured, and in consequence they disappeared. It is vainly sought to make out that they were the victims of their credulity, and of a surprise adroitly prepared. Their communications with an enemy whom it was their mission to fight is an unpardonable military crime. They have been traitors to their duty and also to their country. I declare them deserters to the enemy, and order them to be prosecuted as such. Before the army I devote them to dishonour and shame. They will find from this time their punishment in the account they will hear of the glorious efforts made, and the success obtained, by the Armies of the Loire and of the North.

"This order is to be read three times to the troops assembled under arms.

"GENERAL TROCHU,
"The Governor of Paris.
"Done at the Head-Quarters of Paris, Jan. 9."

The fact was communicated by the Germans to General Trochu, who replied that he was aware of it, and requested the enemy to send back the deserters for punishment, or themselves shoot them. Examples of this nature are perilous in an army of various formation, abounding in non-professional elements, hurriedly composed, dispirited by repeated ill-success and long imprisonment by a beleaguering force, and suffering all the miseries of cold and insufficient food. Trochu may have been wanting in energy and genius; yet he had some reason for doubting the strength and temper of the weapon with which he was compelled to fight the dreaded Germans.

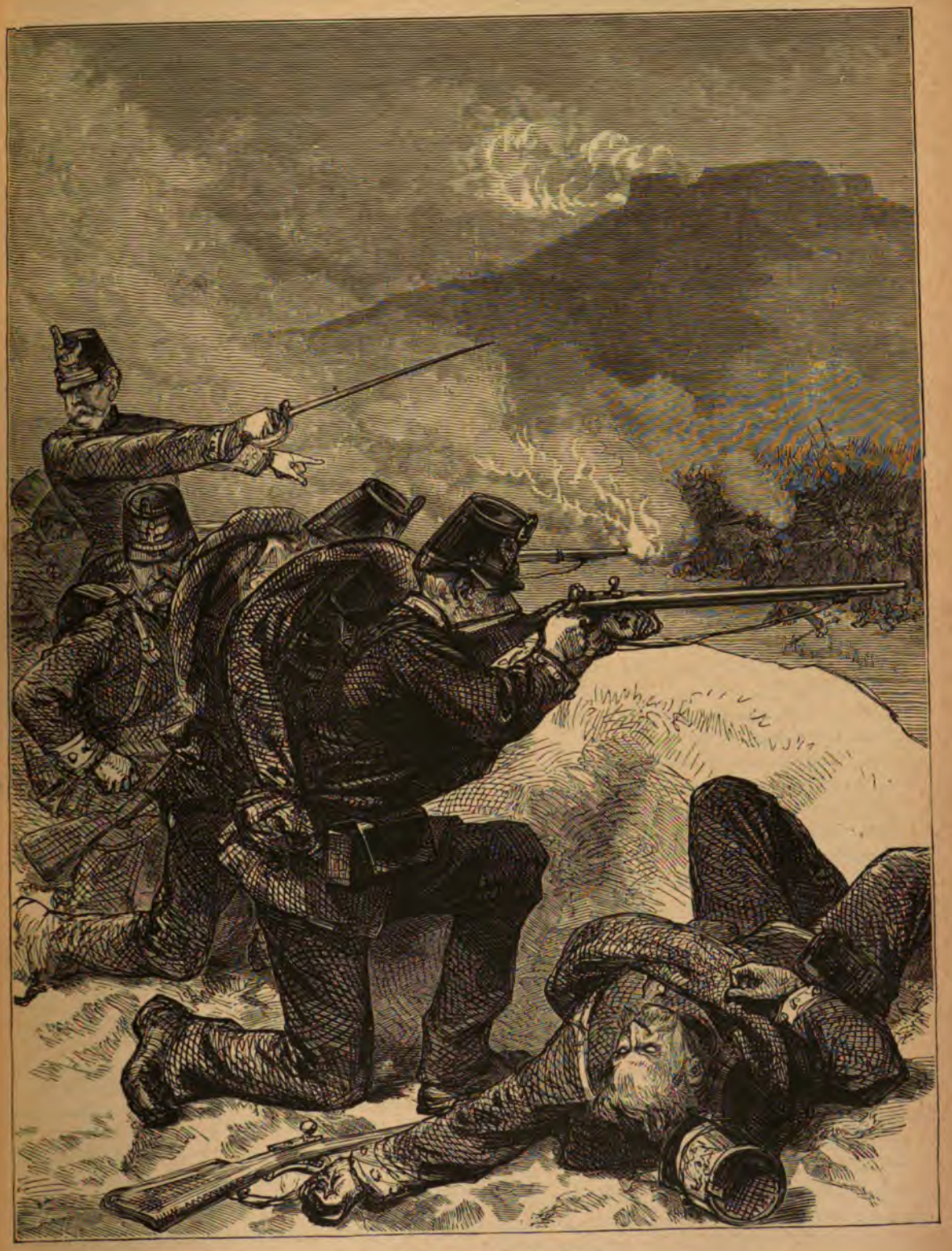
By the 10th of January the scarp of Fort Issy showed signs of having suffered considerably. The embrasures were a good deal damaged, and the front was especially shattered; but the angle-guns still fired occasionally. Vanvres was in a similar condition; but Montrouge, though partially set in flames, mounted fresh guns, and maintained an enfilading fire from the west face. At the same time, Mont Valérien kept firing all round. Shells continued to fall in Paris; yet the greater part of the city was still out of cannon-range. The main chance of success for the Prussians still lay in the rapidly approaching exhaustion of the people from want of the common necessaries of life. To take the city by assault was impossible; to wear it out by the slower methods of a siege was almost as far removed from success. The line of forts was now connected by trenches, provided with batteries, and flanked by the fire of the greater works. The ditch of the inner *enceinte* was eighty feet broad; the counterscarp twenty feet deep, and the scarp thirty-two feet high. Behind these defences the Parisians felt secure, and the bombardment failed to frighten them into abandoning their attitude of defiance. But the rapid diminution of supplies was a more serious matter; and it was already beginning to make those who were best informed on the subject doubt the possibility of Paris resisting much longer, if in truth no help was coming from the provinces.

It is a singular fact that, thirty years earlier, when the Paris fortifications were being constructed, Heinrich Heine wrote of them in a spirit of melancholy forecasting which was painfully realised. In February, 1841, he remarked:—"France has not yet come to its end; but, like all nations, like the human race itself, it is not everlasting. It has perhaps already passed its meridian, and is now undergoing a metamorphosis which cannot be disguised. The decision of the Chambers on fortifying Paris indicates such a transition period of French national feeling. The French have learnt a great deal of late; they have lost all desire of blind irruptions into dangerous foreign territory. They now wish to intrench themselves against the eventual attacks of their neighbours. France no longer lives in the reckless intoxication of its unconquerable supremacy; it has been sobered by the lenten consciousness of its conquerability, and, alas! whoever thinks of death is already half dead. The fortifications of Paris are perhaps the giant's shroud, which the giant with melancholy forebodings has decreed for himself. A good while, however, may elapse before its death-hour strikes, and it may previously inflict the most deadly injuries on its inferiors in stature. The fortifying of Paris is the most momentous event of our time, and the men who voted for or against it in the Chamber of Deputies exercised the greatest influence on the future Will these works afford protection from the storm, or will they attract still more destructive lightning? Will they save Paris from ruin, or mercilessly expose it to the destructive rights of war? I do not know, for I have neither place nor voice in the councils of the gods. But I know this much, that the French will fight well if they have to defend Paris against a third invasion." Never were more prophetic words spoken. The construction of the Paris fortifications must have proceeded from a profound conviction that the day might arrive when Paris would again be attacked by the same legions that had twice before, in the earlier years of the century, held it in armed subjection. Unhappily, the defensive works only encouraged a false security, and an audacity that invited disaster. The foreign policy of France became all the more aggressive because the people of Paris supposed they had an impregnable defence in the fortifications designed by M. Thiers and Marshal Soult.



SHELLING OF THE PORTE MAILLOT.

The bombardment went on from day to day with but little variation. Occasionally, however, a special incident would occur, as on the 10th of January, when a fight took place in the direction of Clamart. Some time previously, an earthwork on the left front



THE LAST SORTIE FROM PARIS.

of Clamart had been seized by the Bavarians. The French determined to make an effort to recover this position, and accordingly dashed forward, surrounded the work on three sides, overpowered the picket stationed there, killed and wounded nearly one-half, and took away twenty prisoners. The officer in command escaped with seven bayonet wounds. The success of the French, however, was but short-lived. Soon afterwards, the Guards on the right and left poured down on the assailants, and drove them out; but the affair led to heavy firing along the line. After dark, large bodies of French troops were observed in the vicinity of Issy, and about midnight the advanced line of the Bavarian sentries and pickets retired, owing to some vague alarm; but the French did not attempt any further movement. On the following night, three reconnaissances were pushed out against the Clamart plateau; but the Germans were on the alert, and nothing of importance resulted. Generalising the usual features of the night work, Dr. Russell, in his letter of January 13th, said that they consisted of a succession of alarms, musketry skirmishes in the dark, sorties or reconnaissances, patrollings outside the forts, and cautious movements on the part of the Germans, ending in collisions. Speaking of the armament of the besiegers, the same authority wrote: —"There seems to be a want of very heavy guns on the part of the Prussians. The 24-pounder steel guns, calibre 5·869, weighing close on 50 cwt., firing 5 lb. charges and shells of 56 lb. weight, have increased the charge as far as they can do so with safety. The 12-pounder, with a calibre of 4·737, firing a charge of 2 lb. 2 oz. and a shell just under 30 lb., is wonderfully effective for its size and weight; but a glance at the ratio of charge to projectile will show any artilleryman its real power. Probably the heavier guns have generally been sent to the sea-coast, and so far the French fleet has done service to the defence of the French capital. The newly-constructed 24-pounders, which are mostly used, are rather short guns, and are not to be compared with the longer pieces; but difficulties of transport and general handiness told in their favour. The trials made at Schweidnitz and Fulich with the long guns against masonry excited expectations which are not quite justified here." The consequence was that a large part of Paris remained beyond the range of the German fire. The French guns—especially those at Mont Valérien—carried much farther; and one day Count Moltke himself had a narrow escape of being killed. As he was getting out of his carriage on his way back from his usual post of observation, a shell burst close by, covering him and his companions with earth.

The general character of the bombardment was vividly described by Herr Wachenhusen, who, writing from Versailles on Sunday, the 15th (when the firing only ceased for a short time in the earlier part of the service at the Palace Chapel), said:—

"I read somewhere or other—I do not remember where—that the bombardment of the Paris forts made such a noise at Versailles that it took away all one's senses. I fancy the correspondent is somewhat nervous. This great rumbling concert has nothing in it to produce such an effect; it is rather a prolonged monotone. One becomes accustomed to it, like a person who lives in a windmill. At first you listen and count the shots, fancying you can distinguish from the detonation and the distance which are those of the enemy and which our own; then you feel as if you were living near some enormous factory, with the steam-hammer falling at regular intervals; at last you notice nothing more, and are only made aware of it when a pause takes place in the firing, and the dull tones no longer penetrate the dense fog that envelopes us day and night. Fog everywhere. Grey and miserable the canopy hangs over us; in the afternoon, at times, only dark shadows are seen gliding through the dull veil of mist, and in the evening it so surrounds the lamps of the streets and squares that scarcely the faintest glimpse of light is visible. No change takes place now in our daily life at Versailles. Formerly there was constant alarm. The artillerymen were of a sudden mobile; the limbers on the Place were filled with life; the guns were horsed; battalions filled the Place. Now everything is quiet, for it has all become a habit. Even visiting the foreposts has become a dangerous excursion, and only possible at certain hours, during which the French bombardiers are busy with knife and fork; for where formerly one or two grenades struck, the pieces fly about in every direction, dealing death and destruction to all who venture within reach. Even the roads and walks within range of the French guns are now shelled, and in the woods and thickets the shots come crashing through the trees, smashing stems, boughs, and branches. If it formerly resembled a storm, in which the lightning's destructive powers are only occasionally felt, now hundreds of flashes dart through the sky, here bursting through a roof, there rending a wall asunder, and again carrying destruction among the trees of the forest. And yet a more measured time has been observed recently. Mont Valérien is still somewhat silent, probably on account of its heavier guns having been withdrawn. The 'grande Josephine,' however, is said to have been left. On our side likewise the firing has not been so furious since the Paris forts have been quieter; and whereas formerly sixty shots were fired from a gun, the number is now only thirty, quite enough still to form a mad allegro. The guns have their proper directions and distances, but the fog, nevertheless, frequently stops the cannonading for half a day at a time. Our artillery officers and men have an arduous task. Imagine twenty-four hours of hot work in the midst of a storm of grenades from the enemy before being relieved; then imagine the new

percussion system of the French, who have profited by the experience gained from our artillery, and likewise from the indiscretions of some of the newspaper correspondents; imagine this hostile artillery greatly improved, acting with precision upon a soil thoroughly known to them; and a picture may readily be formed of the difficulties and dangers that our artillerists have had to undergo since the commencement of the bombardment. A source of joy to them is the masonry of the fortifications, which the French love so much. It causes quite a burst of delight in our batteries when the brick-work is knocked down or the stones are seen to fly about. The effects have been felt by the Parisians even in the town, into which it is estimated that three grenades can be thrown every two minutes."

The fires in Paris caused by the bombardment were few, and easily extinguished. During the night between the 8th and 9th of January, twelve broke out, but were soon checked by the firemen. In one direction, on the following night, a shell falling upon a heap of shavings caused the destruction of the premises. In another, some stores of unthreshed wheat and oats were destroyed in the same way. Several houses were struck by shells, and many persons were killed in their rooms, and sometimes in their beds. Even the cellars were not always free from these alarming visitors. The loss of life, considering the size of the city, was not great; yet it was considerable. In some instances, however, the escapes were remarkable; and, on the whole, the bombardment proved to be less awful than was expected. The authorities, nevertheless, considered it advisable to issue an order forbidding all persons from touching any entire shell which might fall in the streets, and enjoining them to give notice to the commissaries of police and to the chiefs of the fire-brigade, who were to collect all bombs, and deliver them to the artillery committee. The majority of the citizens still kept up a good heart. Everybody, said the head of one of the chief manufacturing establishments, in writing to a friend in Belgium, placed his resources at the disposition of the Government. At one of the great workshops for the manufacture of locomotives and steam-boilers, 6,000 kilogrammes of gunpowder, and 40,000 kilogrammes of flour, were produced every day. The same thing was done at other places. Shells were manufactured from vast masses of cast-iron still remaining in store, and people talked of turning the railings round public institutions into projectiles when the more regular stock of metal was exhausted. On the subject of fuel, this writer stated that, in addition to the enormous quantities of wood to be obtained from the districts around Paris, there was a large amount of coal still in hand, and that, in order to economise this, many of the Parisian manufacturers had begun to consume asphalte, of which the footways of the capital, extending over more than 1,000 kilomètres, ensured a year's supply. The various workshops were in full activity, notwithstanding the demand for military service; building operations were being prosecuted, and financial transactions were not neglected. This gentleman evidently took an extremely sanguine view of the situation; and when he said that they had food sufficient to last beyond the middle of March, he relied upon impressions which events soon proved to be erroneous.

As the month advanced, all the coal and coke in Paris was expressly reserved for public purposes, such as the flour-mills, gunpowder-mills, and cannon-foundries. Smaller quantities were issued to printing establishments and other branches of industry of public necessity; but to private individuals they were rigorously denied. Wood, however, was sold without restriction at the special wood-yards in each arrondissement. A great number of barges, lying in the river near Paris since the commencement of the siege, it was proposed to break up, with a view to using the materials as fuel. A decree emanating from the Government ordered that all the stores of bitumen in the city should be placed at the disposal of the Government. A method had been found to convert bitumen into a combustible adapted for steam-boilers, and therefore of great value to the numerous manufactories of arms. The new combustible was said to leave as a residuum a kind of coke, very heavy, but capable of being used for the heating of ovens. Most writers agreed in saying that the very poor actually suffered less misery that winter—at least, until the final collapse—than in ordinary years. This was owing to the support they received from public and private charity, and to the large amount of employment created by the military operations. The prices of food in January, however, were terrible. For a hare, £2 16s. was asked. Larks were 2s. 4d. each, and apples fetched the same sum. A fresh egg cost nearly 2s., and butter was 30s. a pound. The two elephants in the Jardin d'Acclimatation—"Castor" and "Pollux"—were killed, and eaten for food; and a few slices of the trunk (which was considered the best part) cost 24s. each. Of the character of these animals, considered as food, very different accounts were given. For purposes of cookery, tallow was often used, as being almost the only kind of grease obtainable; and it is said to have answered very well.

Thus, in darkness, and gloom, and ever-deepening hunger, the month wore on, and still Paris

retained no little of the spirit with which it entered on the days of siege. The streets at night were but faintly lighted, yet there was very little crime of the ordinary kind. Politicians continued to discuss the great questions of government and society; and how far the laws of war had been broken by the enemy was a frequent subject of argument. The firing on bearers of flags of truce was a crime alleged by each side against the other, and was probably committed by both—sometimes, doubtless, by accident, or in ignorance. All France, indeed, interested itself about the rights and duties of belligerents out of Paris, and General Faidherbe denounced the custom of the Prussians with reference to the towns which they assaulted. In a letter to the Sub-Prefect of the Seine, on the subject of the capitulation of Péronne (which was thought by the French commander in the North to have occurred with undue haste), Faidherbe observed:—"Formerly fortifications were attacked while letting the town alone. It was a sort of international convention, and was the law of nations. The Prussians in this, as in many other things, have broken with the past. They do not attack the fortifications; they bombard the towns. I accuse them of having failed in the observance of usages and customs which have been preserved by civilised peoples by a convention which is tacit, if not written." All such matters, however, belong to what may be called the morals of war—a large and grave question, which sooner or later must come up for consideration, and which must be interpreted after some nobler and more humane fashion than that which is now generally sanctioned, if we would not see the nineteenth century degenerate to the level of the ninth.

CHAPTER XV.

The Sorties of January 13th and 15th—Boy Soldiers—Aiming at Hospitals—Number of Persons killed in the Streets—German Observatory—The Stores of Provisions and Ammunition in Paris—The Bread of the Besieged—Religious Excitement—State of the City in the Middle of January—Agitation with regard to Spies—The Doings of Sergeant Hoff—Precautions as to Food—Desertion of the Southern Bank of the Seine—Balloon Despatches—Ghastly Incidents—The Last Great Sortie (Jan. 19th)—Description of the Ground—Commencement of the Action—Development of the Attack by Three French Wings—Severe Fighting in the Park of Buzenval—The German Dispositions—State of Affairs at the End of the Day—The French ordered during the Night to evacuate their Positions—Incidents of the Battle—French Despatches—Excitement in Versailles—Failure of the Last Hope.

GENERAL TROCHU was fated to be constantly overruled, and compelled to do that which his own judgment did not sanction. He had no faith in sorties; yet he was obliged every now and then to acquiesce in them. The demand for another of these desperate sallies became so strong as the month of January drew towards the middle, that arrangements were made for fulfilling the popular desire. Accordingly, on the night of January 13th, an attack was directed on the Prussian positions to the north-east of Paris. About a week before that date, the Saxon line was moved to Sevran and Aulnay, and the posts of the Prussian Guards were made to commence at Blanc Mesnil, about a mile to the north-west of Aulnay. There were also Prussian posts at Le Bourget and Pont Iblon. At half-past ten o'clock on the night indicated, the forts of St. Denis, Aubervilliers, Romainville, and Noisy, opened a heavy cannonade on the three Prussian positions, and shortly afterwards the French advanced against them from Drancy. The main body moved on Le Bourget; but at the same time wings were thrown out in the direction of Aulnay and Pont Iblon. It was seen that these forces were considerable, and that they were accompanied by field artillery. The field-batteries of the Prussian Guards therefore at once commenced firing on the enemy, and were soon joined by the three siege-batteries on the line between Aulnay and Dugny. A number of French infantry made towards Le Bourget—that unfortunate village, familiar with so many of these raids. The Prussian infantry of the Guards were directed to oppose their entrance; but the assailants did their utmost to prevent the troops at Aulnay, Pont Iblon, and Blanc Mesnil from going to the assistance of the Guards, by directing on those positions, from the wings of the attacking force, a storm of shells and chassepôt bullets. The Germans, however, replied so vigorously that the French, after a time, were compelled to draw back from that direction. In the meanwhile, a furious combat was going on at Le Bourget. On nearing the place, the assailants were received with such a deadly rifle-fire from the Prussian Guards that at first they were forced to withdraw to a considerable distance. Shortly before mid-

night they again advanced, and made another attempt to force their way into the village; but, after a struggle of twenty minutes' duration, they were once more hurled back. For the next half hour, an artillery duel was maintained with great warmth, and the French wing which had been spread out in the direction of Pont Iblon closed in towards the centre of the attacking force. A third attempt to take Le Bourget was made some time later, with the same ill-success that had attended the former two. On this occasion the French infantry approached in augmented numbers; but Prussian reserves were summoned from Pont Iblon, and advanced with the band playing at their head. The French did not await their arrival, but at once began to retreat rapidly. The artillery on both sides continued to fire for some time longer; but the sortie itself was at an end.*

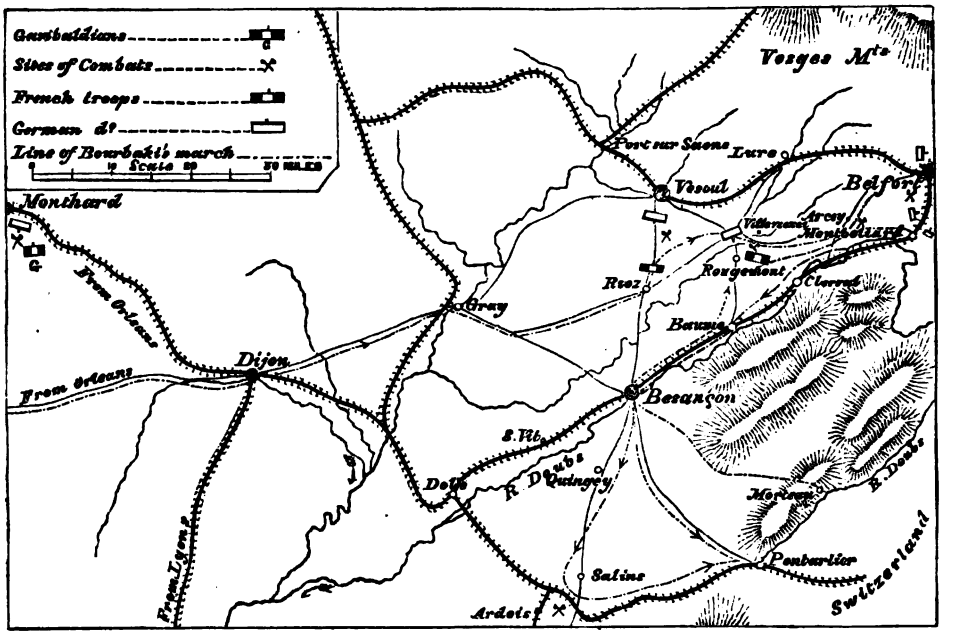
The night was very foggy, and the French had doubtless hoped to effect a surprise of the Prussian posts. The Prussians, however, had heard, as early as eight o'clock in the evening, various sounds from the direction of the French positions, which put them on the alert. In Drancy—which had for some time been held by the French—bugle-calls were being sounded, and the tramp of mustering men went on busily. The marching of troops across the open plain from Courneuve to Drancy could also be distinctly heard. This space had recently been covered by the French with three successive lines of entrenchments. The farther parallel (to adopt the description given by the *Daily News* correspondent with the Saxon Army) touched with its left the Courneuve road at a point in advance of the village; came with a slight sweep to the Lille road at a place where there were two or three houses; and was continued with a little more bend to the end of Drancy nearest to Le Bourget. The second line had its left on Courneuve itself, and its right on the farm of Drancy, in the rear of the village. The *replie* line was on the road from Courneuve to Bobigny. It was inside one of these lines that the Prussian foreposts heard the enemy coming over to Drancy. These warnings enabled the force holding Le Bourget to prepare for giving the assailants a warm reception. Posted behind barricades on the roads leading off from the Paris end of the village, at the back of loopholed garden walls, and in various houses, the Prussians fought under shelter, and of course at a great advantage to themselves.

The French were terribly exposed, and at times could not be got forward, though their officers alternately implored and swore at them. They must have lost many men; but in their final retreat they managed to carry away all their dead and wounded. Among the Prussians, not one man was killed, and only six were injured.

Another sortie in the same general direction was undertaken by the French in the early morning of January 15th. It was preceded by a violent fire from the French forts, and from the entrenchments between the forts and the batteries at Drancy. To this the Prussian batteries replied with animation, and sheets of flame ran along the whole line of the Soissons railway. The French on this occasion issued from Groslay Farm and Bondy, and advanced on Nonneville, at the outskirts of the forest; from Rosny on Villemanble; and from the base of Avron towards Gagny. The combat was chiefly one of artillery; but again there was an infantry fight at unhappy Le Bourget. The sortie at first looked sufficiently serious to induce the German commanders to hold large reinforcements in readiness; but these were not needed. Speaking generally, the sortie was delivered against the Prussian and Saxon lines. It was a complete failure, and again the German loss was but small. Among the French prisoners was a lad of sixteen, who had only been a soldier nine days. One of his comrades, of the same age, was shot through both legs, so as to necessitate amputation. "The two boys," said a correspondent of the *Times*, "were National Guards, and when the company to which they belonged reached the Saxon outposts there were no officers with it. The company was commanded by a sergeant. The prisoners said that they had plenty of bread, biscuit, and wine, and that horseflesh was served out to them three times a week. With the party making the sortie on the Saxon line were fifty artillerymen, who carried with them large nails and hammers for the purpose of spiking such guns as they might be able to seize. The attacking force was composed of soldiers of the Line and National Guards." It is hard to say what the French hoped to obtain by these two sallies. They were not made in sufficient force to give the least chance of breaking the line of investment, or even of thrusting it farther back; and as regards material damage, they hardly inflicted any on the besiegers. Probably it was felt necessary by the military authorities in Paris to appease the popular impatience by some show of action, even though it ended in nothing.

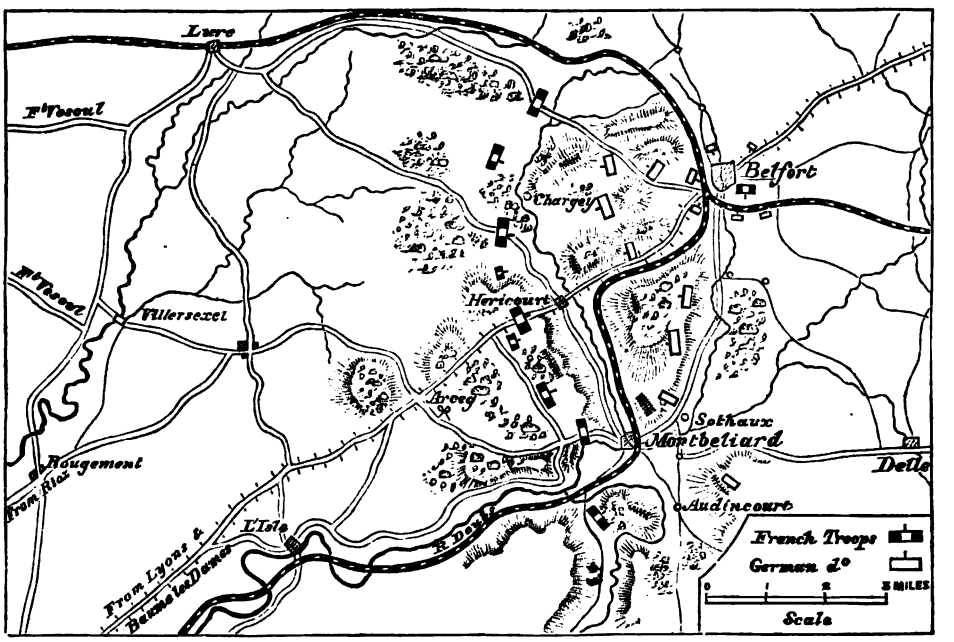
These were the episodes of the siege. The usual course of events was that which has already been described—a constant succession of shells poured on the city, battering and destroying a number of houses, killing and wounding several people, but producing not the slightest effect of a

* *Times* Correspondent at Le Vert Galant.



ADVANCE AND RETREAT OF BOURBAKI FOR THE RELIEF OF BELFORT FROM 1ST TO 28TH JANUARY.

The French, from Orleans, advanced through Dijon on Rioz and Rougemont, and thence to Belfort. In the retreat, the Prussians cut them off at Quingey, and forced them towards the Swiss frontier by the small combat of Arbois.



BATTLES OF THE 15TH, 16TH, 17TH, BEFORE BELFORT, BETWEEN BOURBAKI AND WERDER.

The bridges on the Doubs were broken. The French held the area between the Lure, the Belfort road, and Montbeliard, and attacked the German army. The latter kept the infantry under cover, and defended the heights by artillery fire only.

military nature, and bringing the authorities no nearer to a desire for capitulation. Mr. Bowles, the Paris correspondent of the *Morning Post*, said, when writing on the 11th of January, that the Luxembourg, the Invalides, and the Ambulance of the Val de Grâce, appeared to be the chief points aimed at, as the greater part of the shells fell about them. "As the Geneva flag does not protect ambulances from Prussian shelling," said this gentleman. "General Trochu has taken away all the French

wounded from the Val de Grâce, and filled it with Prussians, who can hardly complain if they suffer from the barbarity of their own comrades." Few Englishmen had such good opportunities of observing the direction and effect of the German fire as Mr. Bowles; and, in his judgment, nothing could be more absurd than the plea that these buildings were struck by accident. The Prussians were admirable marksmen, and when they intended to hit an object came only too near it. Yet the Paris hospitals were shelled over and over again, and were not more than 189. The average was 350 every night, and 150 every day. An official report is appended below of the effect of this continued fire on the civil population up to January 17th.*

On the calculation that 6,000 shells had been thrown into Paris up to January 17th, the figures there quoted show (as Mr. Bowles remarked) that only one shell in twenty hit anybody, and only one in seventy-five killed. Half of the victims were women and children.

The progress of the bombardment was watched



CAPTURE OF A BALLOON FROM PARIS.

some of their inmates were killed. "Three wounded soldiers in the Hôtel de la Pitié," said Mr. Bowles, "and four others in the hospital of the Val de Grâce, who had so far violated civilised usages as not to die at once of their wounds, were shelled with great precision, and blown to pieces in their beds, as well as one of the nurses who was interfering with the designs of Providence by attending upon them. Five little children, of ages varying from five to thirteen years, who as a reserve force were capable of being used against Prussia in a future war, were made the objects of a 'material guarantee' by being equally killed in their beds." The bombardment went on day and night, almost without cessation, though with considerable variations in intensity. On the night of the 8th of January very nearly 900 shells fell in the streets of Paris; on the 16th there by the heads of the German army from an observatory scooped out of the solid rock in one of the

* LIST OF KILLED AND WOUNDED IN PARIS, BY THE BOMBARDMENT, UP TO JANUARY 17.

Date.	Children Killed.	Women Killed.	Children Wounded.	Women Wounded.	Men Killed.	Men Wounded.	Women & Chil. Kd. & Wounded.	Men Killed and Wounded.	Totals.
Jan. 5 and 6...	1	1	—	3	3	2	5	5	10
,, 6 and 7...	—	1	—	6	3	—	7	3	10
,, 7 and 8 ..	—	2	3	2	—	8	7	8	15
,, 8 and 9 ..	8	4	6	9	10	22	27	32	59
,, 9 and 10...	7	3	9	9	2	18	28	20	48
,, 10 and 11...	—	1	1	8	—	11	10	11	21
,, 11 and 12...	—	- -	2	5	3	3	7	6	13
,, 12 and 13...	—	1	1	8	—	11	10	11	21
,, 13 and 14...	2	1	2	7	6	15	12	21	33
,, 14 and 15...	4	1	2	6	9	9	13	18	31
,, 15 and 16...	1	1	2	7	4	6	11	10	21
,, 16 and 17...	—	—	—	4	1	9	4	10	14
Totals.....	23	16	28	74	41	114	141	155	296

heights overlooking Paris from the south-west. The room was lit with loopholes bored through the stone, which in some parts was several feet thick; and it was furnished with a stove, table, and chairs, while cases of wine and boxes of cigars were not wanting to the comfort of its visitors. Hither came rather frequently the Chief of Artillery, the Royal Princes, and the privileged few whom they permitted to accompany them. "Thence," wrote the Versailles Special Correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, "can be plainly seen, on a fine day, almost without the aid of a field-glass, the effect of the Prussian shells upon the outer defences of the city, and the evidences of their stinging power, pitilessly directed upon the faubourgs within the *enceinte* and upon the town itself. The scene is one of utter devastation, hideously bleak and melancholy; no sign of a genuine population native to the soil; only soldiers, snow, battered bastions and earthworks, and, far away, the huge tortured city taking its punishment with sullen desperation. Puffs of smoke, that would seem white were the whole country-side not wrapped in a dazzling garment of winter fleece, but that look dirty yellow as they gush upwards from the wide expanse of snow, rise ever and anon from the cunningly concealed batteries; followed by sounds that are composite —something of the buzz and a good deal of the screech—as the big shells fly hurtling into the faces of the forts, or high over the *enceinte* walls into some street of the Quartier." The sight was of course interesting on several accounts; but it yielded no proof that Paris was prepared to succumb.

Great surprise was frequently expressed in the German army at the enormous quantity of provisions with which Paris must have been stocked at the beginning of the siege, and also at the vast stores of ammunition for the forts which had been laid up there. By the middle of January, Forts Rosny and Noisy had for three months been firing, almost unceasingly, at a part of the Saxon line. The average per day for each of these forts was calculated at 150; and there were about twenty-eight forts or outworks which had been equally prodigal. A good deal of ammunition, however, was produced within the city from day to day. The same could not be said of the food; yet Mr. Bowles, writing on the 17th of January, remarked that food really seemed to become, if not more plentiful, more accessible every day, and that the provision-mongers continued to display a show of preserved meats, and even of live fowls and game, to which the Parisians had been little accustomed since the earlier period of the investment. The bread did not look as tempting as formerly, because, in order to economise it to the utmost, it was made of wheat, oats, barley, and rice, and therefore presented a dirty brown appearance; but it was in truth excellent. One of the most noteworthy results of the siege was that there was a marked increase of religious feeling on the part of a population not generally much given to devout exercises. A Paris correspondent of the *Daily News* said he went nearly every day to the church of St. Etienne du Mont, behind the Panthéon, to see the people kneeling at the shrine of Géneviève, and praying for Paris. Outside, the church was beset with beggars, clamouring for alms, which it was evident they really needed; inside, the shrine of the virgin saint was lighted with candles. The city and the neighbouring villages are supposed to lie under the peculiar protection of Géneviève; and the villages were eager to inscribe their names on banners around her altar. These prayers began on the 3rd of January. Two days afterwards came the bombardment; and the sceptics openly scoffed. By-and-by, however, the Parisians were cheered by the report of a great success of Faidherbe's on the 3rd. "Behold!" exclaimed the religious, "while we prayed, Faidherbe had his triumph in the north." Unfortunately, it afterwards turned out that the "triumph" was of a very equivocal kind, not greatly distinguished from a defeat, which indeed the Germans said it was. The prayers were to continue for twelve days, and on one of those days a shell burst upon the church with a tremendous detonation. Absorbed in their devotions, the worshippers seemed to be unmoved, and the chanting of the litany to the patron saint went on with perfect equanimity.

The condition of Paris in the middle of January was vividly described by the "Besieged Resident" of the *Daily News*, who wrote:—

"In the bombarded quarters many shops are closed. Some householders have made a sort of casemate reaching to the first story of their houses; others sleep in their cellars. The streets are, however, full of people, even in the most exposed districts; and all the heights from which a view is to be had of the Prussian batteries are crowded with sightseers. Every now and then one sees some house through which a shell has passed. The public buildings have, as yet, suffered very slightly. The dome of the Panthéon, which we presume is used as a mark for the aim of the Prussian artillerymen, has not been hit. In the Jardin des Plantes all the glass of the conservatories has been shattered by the concussion of the air, and the orchids and other tropical plants are dying. Although war and its horrors are thus brought home to our very doors, it is even still difficult to realise that great events are passing around us which history will celebrate in its most solemn and dignified style. The rations of

meat now amount to 1-27th of a pound per diem for each adult. At the fashionable restaurants the supply is unlimited, and the price as unlimited. Two cutlets of donkey cost eighteen francs, and everything else in the way of animal food is in proportion. The real vital question, however, is how long the bread will last. The misery among the poorer classes is every day on the increase. Most of the men manage to get on with their 1fr. 50c. a day. In the morning they go to exercise, and afterwards loll about until night in *cafés* and pot-houses, making up with liquids for the absence of solids. As for doing regular work, they scoff at the idea. Master tailors and others tell me that it is almost impossible to get hands to do the few orders which are now given. With the women and children the case is different. The latter, owing to bad nourishment and exposure, are dying off like rotten sheep. The former have but just enough food to keep body and soul together, and to obtain even this they have to stand for hours before the doors of the butchers and bakers, waiting for their turn to be served. And yet they make no complaints, but patiently suffer, buoyed up, poor people, by the conviction that by so doing they will prevent the Prussians from entering the town. If one of them ventures to hint at a capitulation she is set on by her neighbours. Self-assertion, however, carries the day. Jules and Jacques will hereafter quaff many a *petit verre* to their own heroism; and many a story will they inflict upon their long-suffering friends, redounding to their own special glory. Their wives will be told that they ought to be proud to have such men for husbands. But Jules and Jacques are in reality but arrant humbugs. Whilst they boosed, their wives starved. Whilst they were warmly clad, their wives were in rags. Whilst they were drinking confusion to their enemies in some snug room, their wives were freezing at the baker's door for their ration of bread. In Paris the women—I speak of those of the poorer classes—are of more sterling stuff than the men, They suffer far more, and they repine much less."

The excitement with regard to spies acquired additional intensity during the final days of the siege. It was said that many Frenchwomen of bad character paid visits to the Prussian lines, carrying information with them; that poor people drove a good trade in taking out newspapers, for which they were often paid in gold; and that persons were allowed to leave the city under pretence of gathering vegetables in the fields—a permission which they turned to other accounts. From these statements it would appear that the agents of this system of *espionage* were sometimes to be found among the French themselves; but more generally they were Germans. The knowledge of the French language frequently possessed by the people of Germany was of great service to them in conducting their secret operations; and, although the Parisians probably exaggerated the extent to which they were betrayed, there can be no doubt that the Prussians were on the whole well-informed as to the designs of the French military authorities. Prussian officers on guard at advanced posts sometimes knew the watchword of the French lines; and Prussian spies were discovered with the pass of General Trochu regularly filled up. One day, at Asnières, some Mobiles entered a cottage, where they found four Germans being disguised as peasants and soldiers. On another occasion, suspicion was directed towards a little villa near Nogent, occupied by a gentleman with a German name, and persistently retained by him after all the surrounding houses had been abandoned. A light was one night seen to be moved about with singular and elaborate variations of position in the window of this dwelling; and similar signs, as if in response, came from the other side of the Marne. It was evident that a species of signalling was going on; and the occupants of the villa were accordingly arrested, and taken off to Vincennes. The greatest success of the French, however, in counteracting the efforts of the spies, was the capture of one Hentzel,* who, in spite of his German patronymic, was long supposed to be a Frenchman. He was famous (or at least had greatness thrust upon him) for the large number of Prussians he had killed, and for the deadly accuracy of his aim. After the sortie at the commencement of December, he disappeared. It was supposed that he had fallen, but the rumour to that effect was not well founded, for by-and-by a Frenchwoman with whom he had associated revealed some facts about him which seemed to prove that he was in truth a spy; and it was then remembered, as a *Daily News* correspondent related, "that he had a peculiar fashion of going on his expeditions. He went forth with companions, but he seldom returned with any—they were nearly always shot. Those who returned alive from the advanced positions assailed by him declared"—after the discovery that he was a spy—"that he always did his business alone. He made them hold a particular ground, while he himself refused all companionship on what seemed to be the more perilous part of his adventure." It is amazing that Paris should so long have been deceived by so transparent a trick. Hentzel is said to have been a lieutenant in a Bavarian regiment of Chasseurs. A

* This seems to have been the man's real name, although it was stated in some accounts that his name was Hoff. Sergeant Hoff, however, was no spy, but a patriotic French soldier, distinguished by many acts of bravery. He was awarded the Cross of the Legion of Honour, and was afterwards made keeper of the Arc de Triomphe de l'Etoile in Paris, a post assigned to him in recognition of his valour.

detachment of free-shooters of the Seine, in the course of January, took a German officer prisoner at Bezons, whom they alleged to be no other than Hentzel. They said there could not possibly be any mistake as to his identity, and the ill-fated captive was accordingly shot.

So great was the fear of spies excited by these incidents that even persons in high position were suspected of being in league with the enemy. General Schmitz, the Chief of the Staff, was pointed at in the newspapers, in an indirect but well-understood manner, as a traitor to the country; and one of the ladies of his family was included in the charge. The German name of the general was very much against him. Trochu replied to these insinuations in a few words of indignant denial; but it is to be feared that the belief remained with many. The Parisian mind exhibits a strange compound of simplicity and suspicion. It will often credit the transparent devices of a half-concealed enemy, and will then suddenly turn round in a fury of distrust, and charge men of honour and courage with the most ingenious stratagems of treachery. Trochu, Ducrot, Vinoy, and others, were all in turn accused of being traitors.

As the month wore on, the horses of private owners were seized by the authorities for food. Many persons tried to save their animals by lending them to the ambulances, or by registering them as connected in some way with the army or the public service. Foreigners also put in a claim to have their horses saved; but this of course was disregarded. A decree was issued, ordering that all should be given up with the exception of two thousand, which were to be reserved as draught beasts, at the rate of one to each thousand of inhabitants. Of the cows of Paris, three thousand were to be kept, for the purpose of supplying milk for children and invalids; all the rest were to be killed for food. Still, the grim prospect of famine did not excite any general demand for surrender. Parisian wits even found food for joking in the necessities of the time. "Let us establish the institution of Philanthropophagy," they said. "Let us eat each other, not as enemies, but as brethren. We will begin with the Ministers." * The state of things, however, was really most serious. The southern bank of the Seine was becoming almost untenable. Large numbers of people left that part of Paris because of the increasing number of the shells falling in it. In the case of the poor, this enforced removal entailed very serious expenses; and Mr. Richard Wallace—who had the administration of the vast estates of the late Lord Hertford, and who for some time had been the chief supporter of the English population of Paris—subscribed 4,000*l.* in aid of those who had been obliged to quit their houses. This gentleman acted with so much generosity and kindness towards the poorer classes of Parisians that one of the principal streets was named after him.

The northern parts of Paris were comparatively free from shells; but some fell even there. Every one marvelled at the small amount of damage done to public buildings, considering the enormous number of projectiles thrown into the city. Nevertheless, some regrettable accidents occurred. The dome of the Panthéon was broken, and the Ministry of Public Works injured; but a large part of the Prussian fire was simply wasted. The besiegers, moreover, could not prevent a good deal of intercommunication going on between the besieged and the outside world. Fifteen thousand despatches came into Paris on Sunday, the 8th of January, per carrier-pigeon. It took a week to enlarge, decipher, and distribute them, according to the method described in a previous chapter of this History. On Monday, January 16th, a balloon was sent off with a large number of replies. Each of these balloons cost 200*l.*; but they were an immense boon to the Parisians. In this way English newspapers got into Paris, and frequently gave the citizens very acceptable news of their relatives who had sought refuge abroad. The front page of the *Times* was often nearly filled with short advertisements in French, addressed by emigrants to those whom they had left behind in the beleaguered city, and conveying information as to the safety and health of the wife and little ones, or any other piece of intelligence of special interest and importance.

The incidents of the siege were necessarily full of adventure and terror. Countless private houses were suddenly shattered, or at least greatly injured, by the explosive missiles of the enemy. The roofs, in particular, suffered fearfully from this iron and fiery hail. In one house a shell entered through the front wall, exploded on the staircase, and did an immense deal of damage. "The opposite wall," says a correspondent of the *Times*, who visited the spot, "had been broken through in three or four places, and scored deeply in twenty more; the staircase had been so torn that it was not easy to pick one's way over it. Some stout iron railings had been twisted like wires, and not a pane of glass was left in the windows." The same correspondent related some ghastly stories of deaths and mutila-

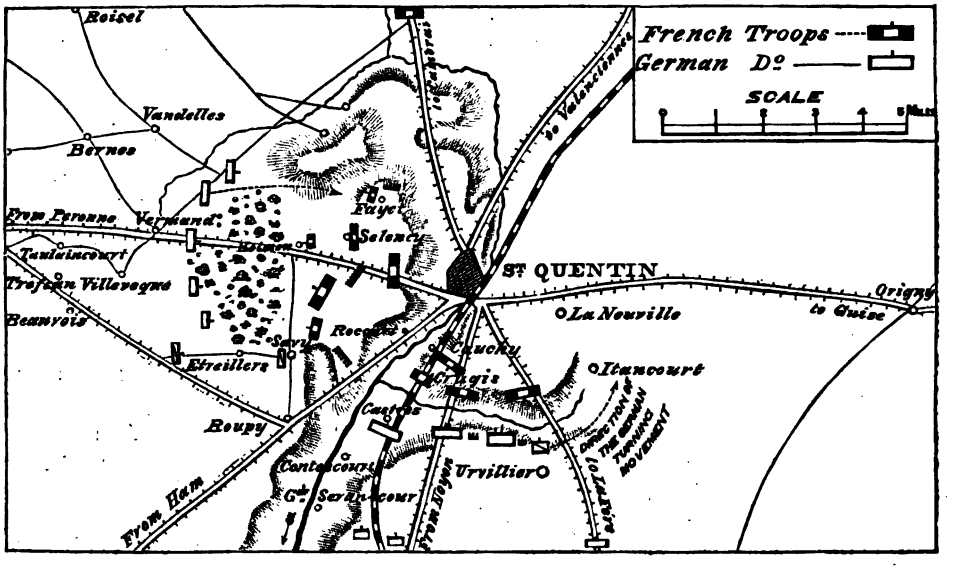
* Correspondent of the *Daily News*.

tions happening in houses which had been struck; and, although he was unable to vouch personally for the accuracy of these narratives, he saw no reason why they should not be true. At one house, it was said, an infant had been killed in its mother's arms, whilst she herself escaped unhurt. At a second, the mother had rushed into an adjoining room, on hearing a shell explode, and had stumbled over the head of her child, lying completely severed from the body. At a third, a woman lying in bed had both her legs cut off by a shell falling through the roof. The correspondent himself saw a shell enter a poor house near the Point du Jour, from which, immediately afterwards, thick volumes of smoke poured forth. Half a dozen people, who were in the house at the time, escaped with but slight injury. "They were seated near the fire," says this writer, "in a room about eight feet square, when the shell struck the outside wall close to the chimney, and burst through a huge hole immediately above their heads. The hair and dresses of the women were white with the plaster that had been showered down upon them, and as for the room, it was a mere wreck—one confused mass of masonry, crockery, and broken furniture, strewn about in fragments. Yet only one of the party, a woman, had been touched, and she had nothing more serious than a slight scalp wound. Another woman, who had been slightly bruised by the falling masonry, could with the greatest difficulty be persuaded that she had not received dire injuries from the shell." The amount of mental distress caused by the blockade and its consequences was perhaps a more terrible evil than the physical sufferings of the time. The *Times* correspondent wrote:—"There are mothers here who since the day the siege commenced have been left without one word of their children—delicate daughters, it may be, who till then were regarded as necessarily the objects of daily watchful care, or sons risking their lives in the endless battles which are shedding blood like water throughout France. Worse still, perhaps, than the entire absence of news, is the arrival of one stray bit of bad news through a journal or favoured letter, without the means of verifying or taking action upon it. I know a lady—and her case is probably one of many—who heard a few weeks ago of the death of her only sister, for years the constant companion and nurse of an invalid mother. The mother is left alone, helpless, and the sole surviving daughter is not only prevented from going to her aid, but cannot even learn how she bears the shock. I know another lady who, up to the moment of the siege, was able to boast that she never had a day's illness or been obliged to send for the doctor, and whose health is now shattered, and her life in serious danger if the siege continues much longer, simply and solely through mental anxiety about the fate of her husband and children. Such cases must be common enough. I am told that they have contributed in no slight degree to fill the madhouses as well as the cemeteries of Paris." While disbelieving that the thing had been purposely done, this authority testified to the fact that the Prussians had fired more stubbornly at the hospitals than at any other public buildings, and that these had suffered especially from the shells. In one of the hospitals, a patient was having a shattered arm dressed by the surgeon, when a shell came into the ward, and took the arm off, carrying it through the floor into the ward below.

A circumstance happening at a restaurant created a good deal of talk, owing to its startling and terrible features. A shell struck the roof, forced its way through floor after floor, and, finally, in the lowest room, carried off half the skull of an officer seated there at dinner. His wife, who was dining with him at the other side of a small table, escaped unhurt, and the shell, glancing off, passed out through the wall of the room, and burst on the pavement of the street. Stories of this kind filled the columns of the papers; yet, being only isolated instances in the midst of an immense population, they did not produce anything like a general panic. The streets were filled with pedestrians, as usual; omnibus and other traffic went on, though particular thoroughfares were closed, as being specially dangerous; and people went to see the houses that had been struck, and sometimes were themselves struck while looking at them. Every one who had not suffered in this way hoped for continued immunity; and the feeling of indignation excited by the killing of women, children, and wounded people in hospitals, strengthened the determination of the Parisians to hold out as long as possible. The bombardment of Paris was in every respect a mistake on the part of the Prussians. It was not the shelling of the city which led to its capitulation. Famine might have been safely relied on for that result, while the resort to more violent measures put the Prussians before the world in the light of gratuitous slaughterers of helpless people, incapable either of opposing or assisting them.

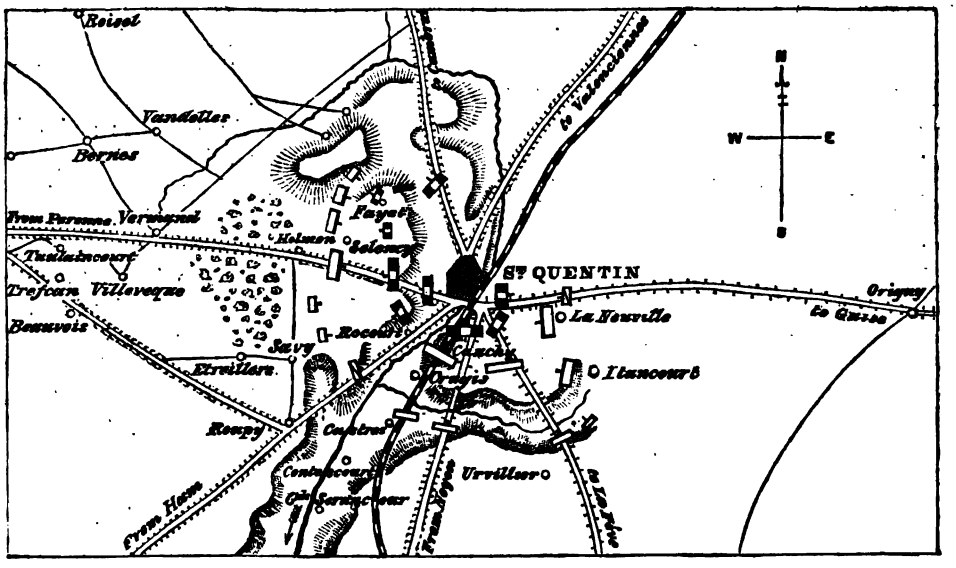
After the sortie of January 15th, no important movement of this kind occurred for a few days, though there were occasional reconnaissances and skirmishes. But the 19th witnessed a renewed endeavour to cut the line of the besiegers. This

time the sally was towards the west, and was undertaken with a view to reaching Versailles, and breaking up the German army at its head-quarters. The fighting was amongst the most desperate in was over-ruled in favour of one which did not meet with his approval. He wished, as a final attempt, to make an attack on Châtillon, in order to turn the defences of Versailles; but the Council of War



BATTLE OF ST. QUENTIN (1), 18TH JANUARY, 1871, 8 A.M.

The Pauly Brigade protected the French line of retreat on Cambrai and Cateau (near Valenciennes). The French Corps (22nd Division and 1st Brigade of 1st Division) were attacked by Divisions Barnekon, Lippe, and Albert.



BATTLE OF ST. QUENTIN (2) 18TH JANUARY, 1871, 10 P.M.

The 23rd French Corps on the west is attacked by Göben and Kummer from Péronne. The village of Fayet is taken, but re-captured by the French, assisted by the Pauly Brigade. The 22nd Corps is turned by its left and driven back on St. Quentin.

the whole course of the war, and the attempt proved to be the last wild effort of the Parisian garrison, on anything like a scale of importance, to shake off the iron coil that was slowly strangling the city and its people. General Trochu, as usual, was not sanguine; and, as usual also, his own plan recently called into being, was in favour of making Mont Valérien the basis of the operation.* From Valérien, then, the attack was directed on the morning of the 19th. The force consisted of

* Speech of General Trochu in the National Assembly, June 13th—14th, 1871.

100,000 men, divided into three main columns, each composed of troops of the Line, Mobile Guards, and Mobilised National Guards, formed in brigades. General Vinoy had command of the left, and was to carry the redoubt at Montretout and the villas of Bearn, Pozzo di Borgo, Amagand, and Ermenonneuve. To General Bellemarre was con-



"WATER!"

signed the centre, which was to proceed to the east of La Bergerie; while Ducrot, with the right, was to operate to the west of the park of Buzenval. The communications leading to the peninsula of Genevilliers, were employed for the concentration of these forces; and the troops assembled during the previous night and in the early morning. The Special Correspondent of the *Morning Post* said, in describing the ground of this sortie:—"The Seine, where it leaves Paris on the south-west side, takes a very exaggerated serpentine course, making a series of long loops. The first loop near Paris encloses a long strip of land some four miles broad, lying over the whole north-west side of the capital. Two-thirds of the way down the strip stands Fort Mont Valérien, crowning a hill, beginning above Rueil, passing through the fort, and then turning round, over the river by Montretout, through Buzenval, where it bulges out and rises into the plateau of La Bergerie, and ending at La Celle and La Jonchère. The Rueil and Mont Valérien side of the hill has always been in the possession of the French, and at the Rueil end they have made two advanced batteries—at the Moulin du Gibet and the Maison Brûlée. The latter battery, being at the edge of the spur, commands a view on the right of Rueil and the surrounding plain, in front, over the valley to La Jonchère and Bougival on the left, up the valley

and across to the château and park of Buzenval, and to Montretout, with La Bergerie rising behind it." By following this description of the ground, with the aid of a map, the reader will be enabled to understand more clearly the operations of the day.

Before it was yet light the ways were covered with crowds of troops, proceeding in very scattered order towards the point of attack. The men were gloomily silent, but seemed full of resolution and courage. As the morning advanced, a fog came on, and it was under cover of this obscurity that the left went into action. They attacked with great spirit, the infantry driving the Prussians out of the woods, and the artillery getting forward, so as to cannonade the Prussian batteries at Garches and the plateau of La Bergerie. This plateau it was very important for the Prussians to defend, for its occupation by the French would have imperilled Versailles itself, by flanking it. The French artillery was therefore vigorously answered by the German batteries, and, although La Jonchère and Bougival were being hotly shelled, the defending forces continued to hold their ground. Reinforcements for the French began to arrive in large numbers from Mont Valérien, the guns of which threw a shell every now and then, but not very frequently. Meanwhile, the extreme left, under Vinoy, was making its way round Montretout, the redoubt of which, and the neighbouring villas, were taken by eleven A.M. The centre, under Bellemarre, had by about the same time established itself on the wooded heights between Montretout and Garches. Ducrot's column, to the right, encountered greater difficulties. In the first instance it was delayed by having, during the night, to move a distance of seven miles, partly on a defective line of rail, and partly on a road encumbered by a column of artillery which had lost its way. The consequence was that Ducrot's division was two hours late in reaching the scene of operations; some portions, indeed, were four hours behind time. Having at length arrived, the men met with a most obstinate resistance in the wood and park of Buzenval, and several of the National Guards, including not a few of the officers, faltered and fell back. General Trochu, in his subsequent explanations to the Assembly (June, 1871), said that the National Guards showed great courage, but at the same time exhibited a want of training. "They overburdened themselves," he added, "with their equipments, and did not act together, each man fighting on his own account. Numbers of our officers and men were shot down from behind, and I estimate that one-eighth of our loss of 3,000 men was caused by the National Guard." In the operations towards Buzenval, General Ducrot behaved with all his wonted valour, constantly placing himself at the head of the column, and risking his life to an extent hardly justifiable in a commander. One of his escort was shot through the thigh; but the general himself, as on previous occasions, was not once hit. The attack in this direction was aided by two armour-plated locomotives on the St. Germain railway, which replied to the Prussian batteries at Carrières, St. Denis, Châtou, and La Jonchère. Still the struggle continued in the park, and the killed and wounded on both sides were numerous. The walls and houses which skirt the park, and which had been loopholed, were made the scenes of a desperate resistance, and a prolonged fight occurred at the gate of Longboyan.

Dr. Russell, after describing the German positions, said they were held by the Fifth Corps, commanded by General von Kirchbach, reinforced by twelve battalions of the Landwehr of the Guard, six battalions in the rear of the Fifth Corps, and six other battalions on the left. Subsequently, part of Hartmann's Bavarians, and a brigade of the First Bavarians, were ordered to march for Versailles in case of need; but their services were not required. The same authority, writing on the 19th, said:—"Nearly a fortnight ago, General von Blumenthal heard that the position was likely to be fiercely attacked, and he then made dispositions which were nearly identical with those of to-day. When the sortie was developed, General Kirchbach sent word to the Emperor 'not to be uneasy; he could promise his Majesty the enemy should never pass his first line.' He kept his word; but it was hard to keep. Never, perhaps, has there been a hotter fire than was maintained for part of the day. One battalion of a regiment of the Tenth Division fired between sixty and seventy rounds a man, and the caissons of the artillery were twice exhausted. The attack of the French was directed against Châtou, Vaucresson, the positions about Malmaison, Marnes, St. Cloud, &c. It must be admitted that all these positions are naturally difficult to take and easy to hold, and that the Prussians have turned all the accidents of the ground to their great profit. There are series of intrenchments and crenelated walls and barricades, in addition to a most formidable *abattis* created by the felling of the woods, so that the trees have all been dropped with their branches towards the enemy, the base of each trunk being a cover for a marksman to fire over as his opponent is struggling to get at him. Montretout is dominated by an earthwork, which was not finished by the French, and which has been occupied by a

small post of the Prussians since the investment of Paris — usually a non-commissioned officer and fourteen men." The wisdom of having thus fortified the position was fully proved that day. On no other occasion did the French come so near dispossessing the invaders of their position at Versailles.

The operations of the day, on the part of the French, were conducted, as far as the general directions were concerned, by Trochu himself, who took up his position in Mont Valérien, occasionally appearing in the field, where he exposed himself to great danger. For some hours he had reason to be well satisfied with the progress of the engagement; but between three and four o'clock in the afternoon the enemy began an offensive movement between the centre and left of the French position, forcing the line to draw back. A little later the Germans again moved forward, and re-captured some of the positions they had lost in the morning; but the secondary positions remained in the hands of the French. On the left, considerable advantages had been gained by Vinoy. The heights and the unfinished Prussian redoubt of Montretout were still occupied by his troops. In that direction the Mobiles and National Guards had behaved admirably. "After taking two barricades," says the *Morning Post* correspondent, "the National Guards continued the fight in the streets of St. Cloud, and pushed forward, ransacking the houses, and bringing out of them some fifty prisoners, as dirty and miserable-looking objects as ever I beheld, clad in flat caps and long grey coats, and caked all over with the yellow clay of the heights. These prisoners seemed by no means dissatisfied with their fate. They scarcely defended themselves at all when they saw the bayonets; and one of them, an officer, came forward smilingly to the National Guards, and, doffing his cap, said, 'Good day, gentlemen! Please to show us the road to Paris.'" The villas in the same direction were held until dusk, in spite of all opposition, and attempts were made to bring up the artillery; but the state of the ground, owing to the late thaw and rains, prevented this. The centre column got into the outskirts of Garches, and might perhaps have penetrated farther, but that the officers failed to second the ardour of their men. Ducrot, at the coming on of darkness, was master of about two-thirds of the park of Buzenval; and the extreme right, after being shelled all day in the plain of Rueil, in Rueil itself, and in Malmaison, remained masters of Longboyan when the twilight closed in. The Prussians, however, renewed the attack on these positions during the earlier hours of the night; and, at two o'clock on the morning of the 20th, orders were given to the French to evacuate all the places where they had established themselves.

The Crown Prince of Prussia, who watched the combat from afar, had a narrow escape during the day. He was standing by one of the German batteries, when a French shell burst just in front, and threw the mud into the air. His Highness was accordingly urged to shift his position; which he did, though in a very leisurely manner. The fighting seems to have been at its hottest between twelve and three. To create a diversion in the rear of the main body of the French, orders were sent to the Fourth Prussian Army Corps to advance from the north; but before it could effect this movement it was obliged to silence the redoubt of Valérien, facing north-west. Some part in the action was taken by the gunboats on the Seine, which kept up a galling fire against the German right, established in the park of St. Cloud. On both sides great courage and determination were shown; the French were acknowledged by their opponents to have fought better than usual; and great praise was bestowed on a body of three or four hundred Mobiles, who, after the rest of the body had been repulsed in that quarter, shut themselves up in St. Cloud, and maintained an unequal contest with a force of Jägers and infantry of the Line until long after the sortie was over in all other directions. One very lamentable incident occurred during the battle. A private in one of the French regiments of the Line (for what reason is unknown) shot his captain, while the struggle was proceeding. Half a dozen men were at once told off to execute him; he fell beneath their fire, but it afterwards appeared that he was not dead. When the stretcher-bearers arrived on their humane errand of removing the wounded, they prepared to carry away this particular sufferer; but the soldiers warned them off. The unhappy creature was then raised up by his comrades, to see if he could stand. He fell heavily to the earth, and was fired at, as he lay, by three soldiers in succession, before he was despatched. The scene was horrible; but stern and summary justice in such a case was necessary for the discipline of the army.

It was officially stated from Versailles that the German loss in this sortie was, in dead, wounded, and missing, 39 officers and 616 men. That of the French was undoubtedly very much larger, especially among the officers, and we have seen that General Trochu afterwards set it down at 3,000. On the following day there was a partial cessation of hostilities in the front, towards Mont Valérien, for the burial of the dead and the bringing

in of the wounded. Previous to the sortie, the Government had issued a proclamation to the inhabitants of Paris, which ran :—"Citizens! The enemy is killing our women and children. He is bombarding us night and day. He pours down shells upon our hospitals. One cry, 'To arms!' issues from all hearts. Those among us who can offer their lives upon the battle-field will march against the enemy. Those who remain here, anxious to show themselves worthy of the heroism of their brethren, will in case of need accept the bitterest sacrifices, as another means of evincing devotion to the country. To suffer and to die, if it be necessary; but to conquer. Long live the Republic!" In the course of the afternoon, the admiral commanding the sixth section telegraphed to General Le Flô, the Minister of War :—

"At dawn, our troops in front of the sixth section occupied Montretout with artillery, the heights above Garches, and on the right a portion of the heights in St. Cloud. Strong reserves have been kept at hand since noon on the counterforts of Garches and La Fouilleuse, near the Seine. The latest orders of General Trochu, who was at Mont Valérien with General Vinoy, to direct the fire of our artillery bastions, are, to fire energetically on the park of St. Cloud and the Valley of Sèvres, over which for the last two hours clouds of smoke have been continually rising."

At six in the evening, M. Jules Favre published the following bulletin, based on despatches received from General Trochu :—

"The battle in front of Mont Valérien has continued since morning. The line of action extends from Montretout on the left to the ravine of the Celle St. Cloud on the right. Three army corps, numbering more than 100,000 men, and provided with a powerful artillery, are engaged against the enemy. General Vinoy, on the left, holds Montretout, and is fighting at Garches; Generals Bellemarre and Ducrot have attacked the plateau of La Bergerie, and have been fighting for several hours near the Castle of Buzenval. The troops have displayed the most brilliant gallantry, and the Mobilised National Guards have shown as much firmness as patriotic ardour. The Governor Commanding-in-Chief has not yet been able to obtain the definite results of the day. As soon as the Government is in receipt thereof, it will communicate them to the population of Paris."

The publication of this despatch excited the most sanguine anticipations on the part of the Parisian populace, who had been crowding the streets all day, awaiting the tidings of victory. Their hopes, however, were soon dashed to the ground. A little before ten at night, another bulletin was issued, in the subjoined terms :—

"The day, which opened so fortunately, has not had the hoped-for issue. The enemy, whom we surprised this morning by the suddenness of our enterprise, towards the end of the day concentrated enormous artillery masses against us, supported by his infantry reserves. Towards three o'clock, the left, which was severely attacked, gave way. After having everywhere given the order to hold on firm, I proceeded to our left wing, and towards evening we were enabled to resume the offensive. But after darkness had set in, the enemy's fire continuing excessively severe, our columns were forced to abandon the heights they had gained in the morning. The National Guards and other troops were throughout animated by the best spirit, and proved their courage and energy in this protracted and sanguinary struggle. I do not yet know the extent of our losses. I have learnt from the prisoners that the enemy's losses were very considerable.

"TROCHU."

Herr Wachenhusen described in one of the German papers the excited expectations of the Versaillese :—

"Groups collected on the Place, at the corners, and in the streets. The great white sortie night-cap of the artisans peeped inquisitively from every window and doorway—symbol of patriotism in the morning and of resignation in the evening—according to custom; and prominent, very prominent, was this night-cap to-day. When it saw the artillery corps assembled under arms on the Place, it was in a great state of excitement. Every one swore that to-day was the last one for the Prussians—that the hour of relief had come. The windows were decorated in the course of the forenoon, the citizens exchanged loyal and valorous grips of the hand, under the firm conviction that everything would be changed before night. They assembled, closely packed, in the *cafés*, listening to every shot that was fired, and in the privacy of the domestic circle they prayed for the glory of beautiful France, which I cannot find it in my heart to condemn. Thunder-clap upon thunder-clap. The windows did not shake, but the citizens trembled with expectation. The battalions marched into the Place. Every one was ready for marching and for battle: Paris undoubtedly was making its last supreme effort to cut through the detested iron girdle which now reached up to its throat. When at length the last gun of the reserve artillery left the Place, the gossips rubbed their hands together. They belong to such a warlike nation, and so thoroughly understand all the symptoms of the case, that they said to one another, 'Now they have despatched their very last gun into the battle, now we shall see the end of them.' Poor fellows! The last gun had scarcely left the Place, and the last soldier marched off, when a Bavarian brigade came up and occupied it, and the gossips crept back into their houses for the purpose of studying behind their curtains, from the expression on the faces of the soldiers, how things might be getting on outside."

Another desperate effort had been made; another

sanguinary failure had ensued; the hospitals were again crowded with wounded, and large numbers of dead were added to the already overburthened list. Yet Paris was no nearer delivery, and France no nearer being saved. The iron cincture of the investing lines was not even flawed; and Germany once more gathering up her strength, saw her enemy recoil in hopeless inferiority from that terrible power which she could neither soften nor destroy.

CHAPTER XVI.

Depression of the Public Mind in Paris—Official Excuses for the Failure of the Sortie—Resignation of the Chief Command by General Trochu—Popular Discontent—Rescue of Flourens and others from the Prison of Mazas—Attack of the Red Republicans on the Hôtel de Ville—Fighting in the Streets—Severe Measures of Repression—M. Favre, Count Bismarck, and the London Conference—Situation of Paris on the 23rd of January—Failure of Provisions—Visit of M. Jules Favre to Versailles—Interview with Count Bismarck—Proposals for the Capitulation of Paris—Further Interviews—The Armistice Convention—Subsidiary Agreement—False Rumours as to the Conditions of Peace—Belfort and the Army of the East—Paris threatened with Famine—Arrangements for sending Food into the City—Effect in Bordeaux of the News as to Paris—Popular Demonstrations—Opposition of M. Gambetta to the Armistice—Despatches of the Delegate Government—Hopeless State of France—Proclamation of Gambetta—Effects of the Armistice on the War in the East of France—The Policy of Despair.

PARIS was sorely stricken by the failure of the last sortie. The people had built great expectations on it, and the utter failure of the attempt seemed to many—as indeed it was—the forerunner of total collapse. The weather was wet; the stock of bread was now so low that it was only issued in rations; and, in the course of the day following the sortie, news of General Chanzy's defeat was published in the *Official Journal*. It is true that the same paper also contained an announcement (which afterwards turned out to be erroneous) of a victory gained by Bourbaki; but nothing could lighten to any great extent the heaviness which now weighed down the public mind. The Germans continued to shell the city, and, though most of the forts still replied, the people did not derive much consolation from the fact. By the middle of the 20th all the regiments which had fought on the 19th were marching into Paris. The evening newspapers stated that General Trochu had requested an armistice of two days to bury the dead; at which people laughed scornfully, alleging that all the dead and wounded had already been brought in, with the exception of those left within the Prussian lines. Then to the first depression of failure succeeded a wild outburst of frantic courage, and people demanded that the sorties should be resumed again and again, day after day, until success should be wrung from the very hands of adverse fate. The excuses for the failure of the 19th, put forward on behalf of the Government, had no other effect than to exasperate the people to fury. The unfortunate result of the fighting was attributed by Trochu to the heavy fog which prevailed, and which prevented him from following the movements of the troops from his post of observation, and so bewildered the officers by whom he sent his orders that they were frequently unable to find the generals they wanted. On the occasion of the previous grand sortie, the frost was charged with its miscarriage; now it was the fog. People asked how it was that these things never prevented the Prussians from winning, yet always proved the ruin of the French. Another cause of defeat was said to be the delay of General Ducrot in getting into action. This was certainly a more valid excuse, but it was not held to be sufficient to account for the entire repulse of the previous day; and the feeling of anger against the generals chiefly concerned became deeper and more intense as every hour passed on.

Trochu remained during the 20th in Fort Valérien, except for a few hours, when he came into Paris for the sake of having an interview with M. Jules Favre at his hotel. It would seem to have been during this brief stay in the city, or some time on the following day, that, as he related in his June address to the Versailles Assembly, a deputation of the National Guards called on him with a request that he would make a sortie with all the men, armed or not, and fight what they called "a torrential battle." The Governor, of course, paid no heed to this insane proposal; but he could not fail to see that the day of his power was over. "After Buzenval," he said, in the speech already alluded to, "all the press, the National Guard, the population, and the Government, were against me. The Government demanded a decisive action, but I refused, for it would have been a military crime. I was invited to resign, but I declined, saying that my colleagues might dismiss me or supersede me; which was done." The *Official Journal* of January 22nd contained an announcement that General Trochu had given up his military command while retaining his office as President of the Government, and that General Vinoy had consented to



WOUNDED IN THE CHÂTEAU OF VERSAILLES.

command the armies of Paris, and to try what he could do for the salvation of the capital. The title and function of Governor of Paris were suppressed. From General Trochu's subsequent statement it would appear that this "giving up" of the military command was not voluntary on his part; but it seems probable that in reality he was far from displeased to get rid of the odium of the approaching capitulation. That the fall of the city could not be long delayed must have been clear to him beyond a doubt, and by quitting his military post he was enabled to avoid breaking the promise not to surrender, which he had made in his proclamation of January 6th. It is noteworthy that, according to a statement published at the time in the *Havas Correspondence*, which quoted the *Vérité* as its authority, General Trochu tendered his resignation as Governor of Paris, and that his colleagues refused to accept it. Another rumour was that M. Jules Favre summoned the Mayors of Paris to meet the members of the Government, and proposed to hand over the supreme power to the former, but that they declined to undertake the burden of such a responsibility. The explanation of the discrepancy with regard to Trochu's quitting the chief command appears to be that, at a meeting on the 20th, when Trochu spoke to his colleagues on the necessity of capitulation, a quarrel ensued; that the Governor offered his resignation, which was temporarily accepted; that very shortly afterwards he was requested to remain at his post; and that on the following day he was removed from the command.



A HASTY DRAUGHT.

Everything warned the Parisians that the time

for resistance had passed. On the 19th (the day of the unsuccessful sortie to the west), the third company of the Saxon Leib Grenadiers, and the tenth company of the Saxon Second Grenadiers, to the north-east of Paris, surrounded and took by surprise the farm of Groslay, near the Forest of Bondy—a position from which some portions of the French troops had issued in the sortie of January 15th. On the night of the 20th, another sortie was attempted against Le Bourget and Blanc Mesnil, and was repulsed. The request of General Trochu for an armistice of two days, after the action of the 19th, was peremptorily refused by the Germans, and it was clear that the conquerors now saw they had their enemy at bay, and were determined to drive him to complete submission. The miserable Parisians must have been equally assured that the end was approaching; yet they would not acknowledge the fact, but still called out for more sorties, and denounced the supineness of the authorities for not perpetually renewing the battle at all hazards. Great fault was found with Trochu for remaining in Mont Valérien after the failure of the last great sally; and he was pointedly reminded by the *National* (a journal rather favourable to Government) that he had solemnly promised that neither he nor his colleagues would quit the city and shut themselves up in the forts—a design of which they had been suspected and accused.

Notwithstanding the general discontent, however, no disturbances occurred on the 20th or 21st; but on Sunday, the 22nd, a serious riot broke out, and led to some bloodshed. A little before one o'clock in the morning, a band of armed men appeared before the prison of Mazas, and demanded the release of Flourens, and of the other political prisoners confined there. The ringleaders induced the director of the gaol to open the gates for the purpose of engaging in an amicable parley with a deputation of the rioters; but as soon as this was done, the whole mass of malcontents rushed in, and bore off Flourens and his friends. They then went to the Mairie of the twentieth arrondissement, pillaged it of all the food and wine they found stored there, and endeavoured to make it the head-quarters of an insurrection. After a little while, however, Flourens and the other agitators, fearing that they would be threatened in this position by superior forces, made for the Hôtel de Ville, according to the usual custom of Parisian insurgents, who always consider that the possession of that building gives them an indisputable title to regard themselves as a Government. The authorities seem to have shown great apathy; for by shutting up the rioters in the Belleville quarter they would probably have crushed the disturbance at once, and yet no such steps were taken. The Place in front of the Hôtel de Ville was not occupied by troops, nor were its approaches in any way protected; accordingly, the Belleville Republicans marched up to the gates, and began to discuss their plans. A considerable crowd was already on the spot, and a great deal of excited and fragmentary conversation took place on the latest development of affairs. The moderate or loyal party hoped much from the appointment of General Vinoy to the chief command. He was characterised as a more energetic man than Trochu; he had already acted with great vigour and judgment in the several sorties; and it was expected that he would now do something signal and startling for the national cause. On the other hand, the extreme Republicans contended that Vinoy was an old Imperialist, and that he would sell Paris to the Prussians, as Bazaine had sold Metz. The only safeguard against such treasonable designs was in the establishment of the Commune, and the placing of the armies under the command of some staunch and ultra democrat. Inside the railings of the middle door of the Hôtel de Ville, a colonel of the National Guards was addressing the crowd, and begging them not to play into the hands of the Prussians by fomenting disorder. His words had little or no effect; but suddenly, at one of the upper windows, appeared a Mobile Guard with a chassepôt in his hand. The mere sight of this warrior and his weapon caused the mob to disperse for a time; and terrible rumours began to float up and down, to the effect that the Government had posted large bodies of troops in all the public buildings, and were even prepared to open fire on the people from mitrailleuses. By-and-by, two companies of National Guards of the Red Republican faction, arrived on the ground, and the crowd then quickly reassembled. This was between two and three o'clock in the afternoon. Various speeches were made, and the National Guards began to handle their cartridges, and to look as if they meant mischief.* Presently a deputation from the Belleville men was admitted into the building, and had an interview with the authorities. It was demanded that the civil power should take precedence of the military, and that municipal elections should be immediately held. This was, in effect, requiring the establishment of the Commune; and both requests were refused, though with courtesy. The deputation was being shown down the staircase at the conclusion of the interview, when

* Paris correspondent of the *Daily News*.

another deputation sought to enter. The officer in charge of the doorway opposed the new-comers, and, after a brief altercation, a volley was fired at him by the National Guards outside. He was untouched, but at a second volley his adjutant fell badly wounded. Upon this, the Breton Mobiles posted at the upper windows fired on the crowd below, and several of the Belleville Guards fled precipitately. It seems probable that no one was even wounded by this discharge; but the fire of the Bretons was soon answered by a party of the rioters who had taken a position in some opposite windows, and by others at the corners of the adjoining streets. A barricade was thrown up at the entrance to the Boulevard Strasbourg, and it is said that the two sets of combatants maintained a running fire for nearly half an hour. Ultimately, however, some Mobiles and loyal National Guards came up, and cleared the Place. The Belleville rioters are reported to have fled with craven pusillanimity as soon as they found themselves overmatched. The Place was then filled with infantry, cavalry, National Guards, and Mobiles, and cannon and mitrailleuses were planted in formidable numbers. Another force was sent to Belleville, with orders to sweep the streets with grape-shot, if necessary; and companies of National Guards paraded the ways to a late hour, prepared for any renewal of the disturbance, which, however, was not attempted.*

According to the official report of the affair, five persons were killed and eighteen wounded. Among the latter were some women and children. Many accusations and counter-accusations were made with respect to the responsibility of commencing the fray; but it seems pretty certain that the first shots were fired by the Belleville battalions, and it is stated that the windows of the Hôtel de Ville were closed at the time. The following official notice to the divisional commanders was issued by the Minister of the Interior:—

"Paris, Jan. 22, 1871, 4.52 P.M.

"Some ill-disposed National Guards belonging to the 101st Regiment de Marche have attempted to seize the Hôtel de Ville. They fired upon the officers on duty, and severely wounded an adjutant of the Garde Mobile. The troops replied. The Hôtel de Ville was fired upon from the opposite houses, which had been previously occupied. Bombs were thrown, and explosive bullets fired upon us. The attack was of the most cowardly and odious character in the first instance, as upwards of one hundred shots were fired upon the colonel and his officers at the very moment when he was taking leave of a deputation which had shortly before been admitted into the Hôtel de Ville. Not less cowardly was it that, after the first discharge, when the firing had ceased, and the square had become empty, we were again fired upon from the opposite houses. Let these things be known to the National Guards, and keep me informed of the state of affairs.

"JULES FERRY."

* Paris correspondent of the *Times*.

On accepting the military command of Paris, General Vinoy had made it a condition that stern decrees should be passed against popular disturbances. Accordingly, after the affair of January 22nd, the political clubs were closed by order of the Government; numerous arrests were effected, and two of the more extreme journals—the *Combat* and the *Réveil*—were suppressed. This suppression of newspapers is a common feature in French political life; but, unfortunately, a very necessary one at times. When the Empire found it necessary to crush sedition by peremptory acts, the Republicans raved with indignation. Now that the Republic had succeeded to the difficulties of the Empire, it was obliged to resort to the same weapons.

The riot of January 22nd not improbably hastened the resolve of the Government to open communications with the Prussian head-quarters; at any rate, it did not delay such a determination. For some time past a hope had been entertained that M. Jules Favre would be granted a safe-conduct to enable him to proceed to London as the representative of France at the Conference on the Black Sea dispute, before which body he would probably have brought the question of peace. It was on the 13th that the request for a safe-conduct was made by M. Jules Favre in a communication to Count Bismarck, wherein he said that Lord Granville had informed him, in a despatch of the 29th of December, that the German Chancellor, at the request of the English Cabinet, had placed a safe-conduct at his disposal; and on the 16th Count Bismarck replied, saying that he could not forward such a document. In the despatch conveying this refusal, the German Minister declined to enter upon official negotiations at the base of which lay the pre-supposition that the Government of the National Defence was internationally capable of negotiating in the name of the French people, before, at least, it had been recognised by the French nation. The Commander-in-Chief, he added, would certainly have empowered the advanced posts to allow M. Favre to pass, without prejudicing the question at issue; but that plan had become impossible, chiefly in consequence of M. Favre's declaration of the 12th of January that an invitation to the Conference would be a recognition of the French Government. This prevented Count Bismarck's complying with the wish of M.

Favre. The Count left it to M. Favre to consider whether any other way could be found to allay these scruples, and to avoid any prejudice being raised by the presence of M. Favre in London. In conclusion, Count Bismarck asked if it was advisable that M. Favre should proceed to London, since the interests then at stake in Paris were far more important for Germany and France than the Black Sea question, especially at a time when the diplomatic agents of foreign States in relation with France, trusting to the protection of the Government, had remained in Paris. It was therefore, the Count remarked, scarcely to be expected that M. Favre, in so critical a situation, of which he had been the main cause, would deprive himself of the possibility of co-operating to effect a solution, the responsibility for which must rest upon him. The Berlin correspondent of the *Times*, commenting on this despatch, remarked that the German Minister desired to keep M. Favre at his post, in order that there might be somebody with whom he could conclude peace when the proper moment arrived. There was no doubt, in the opinion of the same writer, that impediments would not be thrown in the way of any other French statesman unconnected with the Provisional Government. Count Bismarck, in truth, perceived that the submission of Paris, and probably of all France, was near at hand, and he preferred to have M. Favre on the spot, rather than to find him expatiating on the wrongs of France and the rapacity of Prussia at the council-table of the London Conference.

The attempt to gain the ear of the diplomatists about to assemble in the British capital having proved a failure—the great sortie of January 19th being disastrously hurled back—the food supplies in Paris becoming alarmingly low, and the Red Republicans additionally menacing—the Government was brought face to face with the grievous problem it had so long staved off. It was at last necessary, beyond all further doubt, to consider how the beaten and exhausted country could best make terms with the victor. The situation on the morning of January 23rd was most perilous and alarming. The mortality in the city continued to increase in a frightful degree. It had been 3,280 in the week ending December 31st; at the close of the third week in January it was 4,465. The stock of provisions was suddenly discovered to be very much less than had been previously supposed. Only two days before the popular confidence in this respect had been greatly increased by the discovery of a large store of secreted corn; orders had recently been issued for searching all abandoned premises for anything that might by chance have been left there; and it was even thought by many that the city could still hold out some months longer. But on the 23rd the authorities knew only too well that they were very near the end of their supplies. That these had lasted so long was a remarkable and most unexpected fact. On the 8th of September, a little before the arrival of the investing forces, M. Magnin, the Minister of Commerce, announced that the supply of food and liquids then in the city would be sufficient for the sustenance of the population for two months. At that time it was thought the siege could not last so long. It had endured for at least twice the anticipated period; but Paris, though pinched, was not yet actually starved. Nevertheless, famine was rapidly approaching, and nothing but submission could save the population from the worst horrors of a positive deprivation of food. Under ordinary circumstances, Paris consumes each day 8,000 quintals of flour, representing 2,000,000 pounds of bread; but it had now only sufficient flour to be served out at the rate of 5,300 quintals a day for about ten days. The Government, therefore, had no choice but to recognise the absolute necessity for negotiation; and on the 23rd of January it was resolved that M. Jules Favre should set forth immediately for Versailles, and arrange, on any terms, for an armistice allowing the revictualling of Paris.

The Foreign Minister started on his momentous expedition in the course of the afternoon. He reached Versailles at five o'clock in the evening, and it was well known before his arrival on what mission he presented himself. A messenger from Paris had gone before, bearing a request that M. Favre should be allowed to pass the lines. The reply was, that if the object of his coming was to make any proposals with reference to the Conference he would not be received; but that every facility would be given him if he wished to discuss the capitulation of Paris. With this understanding M. Favre went forth; and on reaching the German outposts was met by Count Bismarck's carriage, in which he was conveyed to the office of the great Minister, by whom he was received with much kindness and consideration. "I know the cause of your visit," said the German to the French statesman; "you would stop the further shedding of blood." M. Favre replied that his object was to relieve the terrible sufferings of his unhappy countrymen in Paris, as all hope of relief from without seemed lost, and France must needs seek peace. The Count assured his visitor that the Germans respected the gallantry of the French nation, and pitied its sufferings. The Emperor

William and his advisers had earnestly desired peace ever since the war was forced upon them, and they would now do all they could for that end, consistently with the safety and honour of Germany. What had Paris to offer? In answer to this question, M. Favre said that Paris would capitulate if the army were permitted to march out with the honours of war. Count Bismarck observed that it was out of his province to refuse or accept terms, but that, personally, he did not approve of this proposal, and that he felt confident his august master would reject it. However, he would submit M. Favre's terms to the Emperor. They were of course declined, and were indeed clearly inadmissible. On his own part, the Emperor, acting under the advice of Count Bismarck, proposed the following counter-terms:—The forts to be garrisoned by the Germans; the troops of the Line and the Mobile Guards to be sent to Germany; Paris to receive no garrison, but to be protected by the National Guards, who would not be disarmed. When M. Favre rose to depart, Count Bismarck observed that the surrender should be signed by the entire Provisional Government, to make it obligatory on France. The French Minister objected that the Government at Paris could not bind the Delegation at Bordeaux. The surrender was a purely military and local act, and the Republic might reject every stipulation of a general character. To this Count Bismarck rejoined that if the Republic rejected terms which the German monarch was ready to accept, the result might possibly be a restoration of the Empire. In the course of the evening, M. Favre dined with Count Bismarck, engaging in social conversation; and on the following morning he returned to Paris.

The 24th was spent by M. Favre in Paris, consulting with the other members of the Government. On the 25th, 26th, and 27th he was again with Count Bismarck. At one A.M. on the morning of the 28th, the bombardment of Paris finally ceased; and early on the same day General Vinoy and other officers arrived from the capital, and were closeted for several hours with Count Bismarck, General Moltke, and M. Favre. The result of their discussions was that at seven in the evening the following armistice was signed:—

ARMISTICE CONVENTION.

"Between Count von Bismarck, Chancellor of the Germanic Confederation, stipulating in the name of His Majesty the Emperor of Germany, King of Prussia, and M. Jules Favre, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Government of the National Defence, both furnished with regular powers, the following arrangements have been determined:—

"ART. I.

"A general armistice over all the line of military operations in course of execution between the German and the French armies shall begin for Paris on this very day, and for the departments within the term of three days. The duration of the armistice shall be for twenty-one days, dating from to-day; so that, unless it be renewed, the armistice will terminate on the 19th of February, at noon. The belligerent armies will preserve their respective positions, which will be separated by a line of demarcation. This line will commence from Pont Evêque, on the coast of the department of Calvados, and be continued upon Lignières, in the north-east of the department of the Mayenne, passing between Briouze and Fromentel. Touching the department of the Mayenne at Lignières, it will follow the limit which separates that department from the departments of the Orne and of the Sarthe, to the north of Morannes, and will be continued in such a way as to leave in German occupation the departments of the Sarthe, Indre-et-Loire, Loir-et-Cher, Loiret, and Yonne, as far as a point at which, to the east of Quarre-les-Tombes, the departments of the Côte d'Or, the Nièvre, and the Yonne touch each other. Setting out from this point, the tracing of the line will be reserved for an understanding which shall take place as soon as the contracting parties shall be informed as to the actual situation of the military operations which are being executed in the departments of the Côte d'Or, of the Doubs, and of the Jura. In any case, the line will pass through the territory composed of these three departments, leaving to German occupation the departments situated to the north, and to the French army those situated to the south, of this territory. The department of the North and of the Pas de Calais, the fortresses of Givet and Langres, with the territory which surrounds them to a distance of ten kilomètres, and the peninsula of Havre as far as a line drawn from Etretat in the direction of St. Romain, will remain outside the limits of the German occupation. The two belligerent armies and their advanced posts on either side will remain at a distance of at least ten kilomètres from the lines drawn to separate their positions. Each of the two armies reserves for itself the right of maintaining its authority in the territory that it occupies, and of employing the means which its commanders may judge necessary to attain that end. The armistice applies equally to the naval forces of the two countries, adopting the meridian of Dunkerque as the line of demarcation, to the west of which the French fleet will remain, and to the east of which, so soon as they can be warned, will withdraw the German ships of war which find themselves in western waters. The captures which are made after the conclusion and before the notification of the armistice will be restored, as well as the prisoners who may be taken in the interval indicated. The military operations in the territory of the departments of Doubs, Jura, and Côte d'Or, as well as the siege of Belfort, shall continue independently of the armistice, until an agreement shall be arrived at regarding the line of demarcation,

the tracing of which through the three departments mentioned has been reserved for an ulterior understanding.

"ART. 2.

"The armistice thus agreed upon has for its object to permit the Government of the National Defence to convoke an Assembly, freely elected, which will pronounce upon the question whether the war shall be continued, or on what conditions peace shall be made. The Assembly will meet in the city of Bordeaux.

of surrendering the forts, and the drawing of the line already mentioned, will form the object of a protocol to be annexed to the present Convention.

"ART. 4.

"During the armistice, the German army shall not enter the city of Paris.

"ART. 5.

"The *enceinte* shall be disarmed of its guns, the



A STORM OF SHELLS.

Every facility will be given by the commanders of the German Armies for the election and the meeting of the Deputies who will compose that Assembly.

"ART. 3.

"There shall be immediately surrendered to the German army by the French military authorities all the forts forming the perimeter of the exterior defence of Paris, as well as their material of war. The communes and houses situated outside that perimeter, or between the forts, may be occupied by the German troops as far as a line to be drawn by military commissioners. The ground between this line and the fortified *enceinte* of the city of Paris will be interdicted to the armed forces of the two sides. The manner

carriages of which will be transported into the forts designated for that purpose by a commissioner of the German army.

"ART. 6.

"The garrisons (Army of the Line, Mobile Guard, and Marine) of the forts and of Paris shall be prisoners of war, excepting a division of 12,000 men, which the military authorities in Paris will preserve for service inside the city. The troops who are prisoners of war shall lay down their arms, which will be collected in the places designated, and given up according to arrangements made by a commissioner, in the usual manner. These troops shall remain in the interior of the city, of which they will not be allowed to pass the *enceinte* during the armistice. The French authorities

bind themselves to take care that every individual belonging to the army and to the Mobile Guard shall remain in the interior of the town. The officers of the captured troops shall be designated in a list to be delivered to the German authorities; and at the expiration of the armistice all the combatants belonging to the army confined in Paris will have to constitute themselves prisoners of war to the German army, if before that time peace be not concluded. The officers made prisoners will retain their arms.

"ART. 7.

"The National Guard will retain its arms. It will be charged with the protection of Paris and the maintenance of order. The same will be the case with the gendarmerie and the assimilated troops employed in the municipal service, such as the Republican Guard, the Douaniers, and the Pompiers—the whole of this category not exceeding 3,500. All the corps of Francs-tireurs shall be dissolved by ordinance of the French Government.

"ART. 8.

"Immediately after the signature of these presents, and before the taking possession of the forts, the Commander-in-Chief of the German armies will give every facility to the commissioners whom the French Government will send, whether into the departments or abroad, to take steps for the revictualling, and to bring to the city the commodities which are destined for it.

"ART. 9.

"After the surrender of the forts, and after the disarmament of the *enceinte* and of the garrison, stipulated in Articles 5 and 6, the revictualling of Paris will be effected freely by transit upon the railroads and the rivers. The provisions intended for this revictualment



THE INTERCEPTED DESPATCHES.

shall not be drawn from the districts occupied by the German troops; and the French Government engages itself to obtain provisions outside of the line of demarcation which surrounds the position of the German armies, except in the case of an authorisation to the contrary effect given by the commander of the latter.

"ART. 10.

"Every person wishing to quit the city of Paris must be furnished with the regular permits, delivered by the French military authority, and submitted to the *visa* of the German authorities. Free passes will be granted, in right of their position, to candidates, to the provincial deputations, and to the deputies of the Assembly. The free movement of the persons who have received the authorisation indicated will be permitted only between six in the morning and six in the evening.

"ART. 11.

"The city of Paris shall pay a municipal contribution of war amounting to 200,000,000f. This payment must be effected before the 15th day of the armistice—the mode of payment to be determined by a mixed German and French commission.

"ART. 12.

"During the armistice, nothing shall be taken away from the public objects of value, which might serve as pledges for the recovery of the war contributions.

"ART. 13.

"The transport into Paris of arms, of munitions, or of articles entering into their manufacture, is forbidden during the terms of the armistice.

"ART. 14.

"Immediate steps shall be taken for the exchange of all prisoners of war made by the French Army since the commencement of the war. For this end, the French authorities will hand, as promptly as possible, nominal lists of the German prisoners of war to the German military authorities at Amiens, at Le Mans, at Orleans, and at Vesoul. The liberation of the German prisoners of war will be effected upon the points nearest to the frontier. The German authorities will deliver in exchange, on the same points and in the briefest possible time, to the French military authorities, a like number of French prisoners of war of corresponding grades. The exchange will extend to civil prisoners, such as captains of ships of the German merchant navy, and the civilian French prisoners who have been interned in Germany.

"ART. 15.

"A postal service for letters, not sealed, will be organised between Paris and the departments, through the medium of the head-quarters at Versailles.

"In faith of which, the undersigned have appended to the present Convention their signatures and their seals.

"Done at Versailles, the 28th of January, 1871.

"BISMARCK."
"FAVRE."

It was provided by a subsidiary convention that the *enceinte* of Paris should form a line of demarcation for the French troops; that another, exterior to this, should mark the limits of the German army; that the surrender of the forts and redoubts should take place on the 29th of January, commencing at ten in the morning; and that the arms, field-pieces, flags, and war-material should be handed over to the German military authorities within a fortnight after the signature of the convention, and be deposited, under the direction of the French authorities, at Sévran. An inventory of the armament and war-material was also to be handed by the French to the German military authorities before the 4th of February; and the carriages of the guns on the ramparts were to be removed before the same date.

While the world was waiting in anxiety to hear the terms of peace between the two belligerents, great alarm was created by a statement emanating from the Berlin correspondent of the *Times*, and published in that journal. According to this, the conditions laid down by Count Bismarck, included the cession of Alsace and Lorraine, with Belfort and Metz, the payment of a pecuniary indemnity of ten milliards of francs, the cession of Pondicherry in the East Indies, and the transfer of twenty first-class men-of-war. Some such stipulations may possibly have been talked about in the political circles of Berlin; but the rumour happily proved to be greatly exaggerated, and in some respects totally false. The cession of Pondichery, and the transfer of twenty ships of war—especially the latter—would have given considerable cause of uneasiness and dissatisfaction to this country, had they really formed part of the conditions of peace; but they turned out to be purely imaginary details, at least as far as any settled intention was concerned. The terms sketched out by the Armistice Convention (which, however, of course only partially foreshadowed the final arrangement) were on the whole not unfavourable to France. There was one very serious exception, however. In the discussions between Count Bismarck and M. Favre, the former required that the fortress of Belfort, the siege of which was still in progress, should be surrendered to the Germans. The demand was of course refused, and the Count then declared that in that case the siege operations must go on. Unfortunately for him and for France, M. Favre knew nothing of the desperate state of Bourbaki's army; and he accordingly stipulated that, as a set-off against Werder being allowed to prosecute his operations against Belfort, Bourbaki should be free to endeavour to raise the siege. This was granted by Bismarck, who, being exactly informed of the

position of affairs on the Swiss frontier, must have secretly rejoiced at an understanding which ensured the speedy destruction of another French army, and the placing of France in a position of still more marked inferiority to her antagonist when the actual conditions of peace came to be arranged.

M. Favre, in telegraphing news of the armistice to the Sub-Prefect of Havre on the 31st of January, used the simple and striking expression, "Paris has negotiated because it had no more bread." This was the actual truth. It was represented at Versailles by the French Foreign Minister that the calculations respecting food in Paris had been found to be erroneous by eight days, and that the population was already in much distress. The German Emperor accordingly ordered three millions of rations to be sent in at once from the German army. In the broken state of the communications about Paris and in other parts of France, it was impossible to bring provisions into the capital, on anything like a sufficient scale, under several days; and the people were really threatened with a catastrophe of the most terrific kind. The Republican Government was blamed for not laying up a greater store of food in the capital while it was yet open, but menaced by the advancing enemy. Mr. Bowles, the correspondent of the *Morning Post*, said that the whole of the victualling of Paris beyond its ordinary stores was done by the Imperial Government, and that when the Provisional Administration came into power they suspended all action in the matter, although the railways were available from the 4th to the 17th of September. Every effort, however, was now made to avert the supreme calamity of famine. The Government requested the importation of food from foreign countries, and all impediments to its arrival were removed both by the French and Prussian authorities. In England and various parts of the Continent, arrangements were at once made for conveying provisions to the stricken capital; and Lord Granville directed Mr. Odo Russell, by telegraph, to ascertain from Count Bismarck by what route food could be passed into Paris from England, and to request his Excellency to cause such orders to be given by the German military authorities as would secure the convoys from interruption. The English Government likewise offered its commissariat stores for the same humane purpose, subject to no other condition than that whatever Her Majesty's Government might do should be done with the cognisance and approval of both a French and a German agent. The English War Department and the Admiralty accordingly actively co-operated in the revictualling of Paris, and a number of Government transport vessels left this country with the necessary stores. Twenty-four ovens were set working night and day at the Deptford Victualling Yard, making biscuits for the French; and a French Relief Fund was established in London, and in a few days sent forth agents carrying with them large quantities of food. In acknowledgment of this timely assistance, M. Jules Ferry, the Mayor of Paris and Minister of the Interior, sent the following telegram to the Lord Mayor of London:—"I have taken charge of the first part of this magnificent and fraternal gift. The city of Paris expresses to the city of London its profound gratitude. In the extremity of its misfortunes, the voice of the English people has been the first that has been heard by it from outside with an expression of sympathy. The citizens of Paris will never forget the circumstance; and, if the souls of the two peoples are united, we shall have faith in the future." Meanwhile, the Paris Government was exceedingly anxious that travellers should not enter the city before the revictualling had been effected. It refused, indeed, to make any exceptions to the rule, and Englishmen of high rank and standing were turned back.

During the earlier stages of the negotiations, no intelligence as to the approaching fall of Paris was communicated by the Government at the capital to the Delegate Government at Bordeaux—doubtless owing to the difficulty of transmitting news. The Bordeaux Ministers, however, heard of the fact through English channels, and at first disbelieved it. On the 27th of January, they sent a note to the newspapers, affirming the incredibility of such a state of things, considering that they had heard nothing about it from Paris. On the 29th, however, they telegraphed to all the Prefects and Sub-Prefects a brief despatch from Jules Favre, dated the day before, and containing the most important heads of the armistice negotiation. Great consternation and grief were created by this announcement. A large political assembly was held in the afternoon in the Great Theatre, when a unanimous protest against the armistice was passed, and a resolution was voted, demanding—firstly, the maintenance of power in the hands of Gambetta; secondly, war to the uttermost; and, thirdly, the assembly at Bordeaux of a committee, the members of which should be elected by Republican associations in the principal towns of France. A deputation conveyed the resolution to M. Gambetta. Afterwards, a demonstration took place before the Prefecture in honour of the War Minister. Members of the deputation addressed the crowd, saying

that M. Gambetta could not appear, because he was indisposed physically, but much more so morally. He would take time to come to a decision before speaking in public. Besides, it was necessary for him to recruit his powers in order to be able to devote himself wholly to the safety of the Republic. The crowd replied by cries of "Long live Gambetta!" "Long live the Republic!" M. Gambetta was not long making up his mind as to what he would do in the new juncture of affairs. In telegraphing to the Prefects on the morning of January 29th, he informed them that he would soon make his personal decision known. On the evening of the same day he announced that decision. He said he had resolved on maintaining the existing state until the arrival of one of the Paris Ministers, whose departure for the seat of the Delegate Government had been communicated to him. After he had conferred with this gentleman, he would let the Prefects know the final decision at which he had arrived. On the 30th, M. Gambetta again telegraphed to the Prefects, saying:—"Continue to drill continuously the Mobilised Guards who are still in your department. Any delay would be a serious mistake during the time of respite, which painful circumstances require us to utilise at once for the defence of the country. The blockade is raised all along the coast." The division of the Government into two sections was particularly unfortunate at this crisis in the nation's fate. It should be mentioned to the credit of Count Bismarck that, in order to diminish this inconvenience, he granted the use of the German system of field telegraphs to the Paris Government, to enable its members to communicate in cypher with the members of the Government at Bordeaux.

The Parisian Minister sent to the Delegate capital to represent the views of his colleagues and the situation of affairs on the banks of the Seine, was M. Jules Simon, who appears to have been selected for no better reason than that he had represented Bordeaux in the Corps Législatif, in preference to Paris, when he had been elected for both cities. Before the arrival of M. Simon, M. Gambetta had already lashed himself into a state of great excitement. He speedily sent to Jules Favre at Versailles a despatch expressed in the following terms:—

"Bordeaux, Jan. 30, 1871.

"I have received the telegram addressed to the Delegation at Bordeaux on the 28th, evening, and received on the morning of the 29th. We have announced it to the entire country without comment. Since then we have received nothing. The country is in a fever, and cannot be contented with those three lines. The member of the Government whose arrival has been announced, but whose name has not yet been mentioned, has up to the present time not been reported on his road, either telegraphically or otherwise. Meanwhile, beyond the mere carrying out of the armistice by the troops, which we have taken steps to have respected, it has been impossible for us to adopt any administrative measures respecting the elections in the absence of all explanation on your part, and without knowing the fate of Paris.

"GAMBETTA."

This despatch did not reach Versailles until M. Favre had left; but in the meanwhile Count Bismarck telegraphed to M. Gambetta a summary of the Armistice Convention, in publishing which, on the 31st, the Delegate Government appended some remarks, concluding thus:—"Every facility was given to M. Jules Favre to make arrangements for the armistice, which has been observed by our generals for the last forty-eight hours. On the other hand, the Prussian armies continue their movements, especially in the east, and have occupied various positions, notwithstanding the legitimate opposition raised by our commanding officers. The Government Delegation, which has hitherto received but a single French official document, is entitled and bound to communicate these facts to the country, in order to cast upon those who are at fault the responsibility for errors of interpretation of which the consequences, as affecting our heroic Army of the East, may prove irreparable for France." M. Gambetta and his fellow Ministers were not at that time aware that the several armies of the East had been excluded from the scope of the armistice on the express demand of M. Jules Favre, who was ignorant of the desperate situation of Bourbaki and his starving disorganised levies.

In another despatch to the Prefects, M. Gambetta derived some comfort from the thought that no engagement had been entered into at Versailles, in reference to the question of peace. "The convention which has been entered into," he remarked, "refers exclusively to the armistice, and its object appears to be specially the formation and convocation of an Assembly. The policy maintained and carried out by the Minister of the Interior and of War is still the same—war to the uttermost, and resistance until complete exhaustion. Use, therefore, all your energies to maintain the *morale* of the people. The time of the armistice can be turned to profit by strengthening our three armies in men, munitions of war, and provisions. The troops will be subjected to a severe discipline, to which you must devote all your endeavours, in

concert with the military chiefs. They must exercise daily, in order to inure them to war. The councils of revision should continue, and all work of organisation and equipment, instead of being interrupted, should be continued with special vigilance. At all events, the armistice must be made of service to us, and we *can* make it so. Finally, until the elections, there is nothing that cannot be made profitable. That which France wants is an Assembly desirous of war, and determined at all hazards to wage it." In this way M. Gambetta endeavoured to create a totally factitious impression as to the ability of France to carry on the struggle. At the close of January all had been lost. The armies of Faidherbe, Chanzy, and Bourbaki had been beaten, and hopelessly scattered; Trochu, Ducrot, Vinoy, and the other Parisian generals, had failed again and again in their efforts to break through the investing lines; famine had the great capital itself by the throat; and the country populations were beginning to protest against their youth and manhood being carried off to useless slaughter, in order that it might not be said that the Republic had failed equally with the Empire. In the autumn and early winter resistance to the invader was just and reasonable. To have submitted without a struggle would have argued an entire want of national spirit, such as would probably have invited aggression in future years; and M. Gambetta, in spite of all his faults, deserves great credit for having, at that period, sustained the self-reliance and organised the resources of the land. But everything was now changed. France was defeated, exhausted, and deprived of all rational hope, by a series of disasters of the most crushing and tremendous character; and her only chance for the future was in seeking an immediate peace on almost any terms not positively fatal to the national existence and honour.

M. Gambetta, however, had set his heart on beating the Germans, and showing that to a Republic nothing was impossible. His indignation against the Paris Government for taking the first steps towards peace grew more furious every day, and on the 31st of January he issued the following proclamation, which was in truth a flinging down of the gauntlet to the Ministers at the capital, and almost a call to civil war:—

"Citizens!—The foreigner has inflicted upon France the most cruel injury which she has had to suffer in this accursed war, in the unmeasured chastisement of the errors and weaknesses of a great people. Paris, the impregnable, forced and vanquished by famine, could no longer hold in check the German hordes. On the 28th of January she succumbed. The city remains still intact, as a last homage which has been wrested by the power of moral grandeur from the barbarians. The forts alone have been surrendered to the enemy. Paris, however, in falling, has given to France, by her heroic sacrifices during five months of privation and suffering, time to appeal to her children to find arms and to form armies, still young, but powerful and determined, and to whom, up to the present, steadiness has alone been wanting—a quality which can only be acquired by time. Thanks to Paris, if we are determined to act as resolute patriots, we hold in our hands all that is necessary to revenge her and to deliver us.

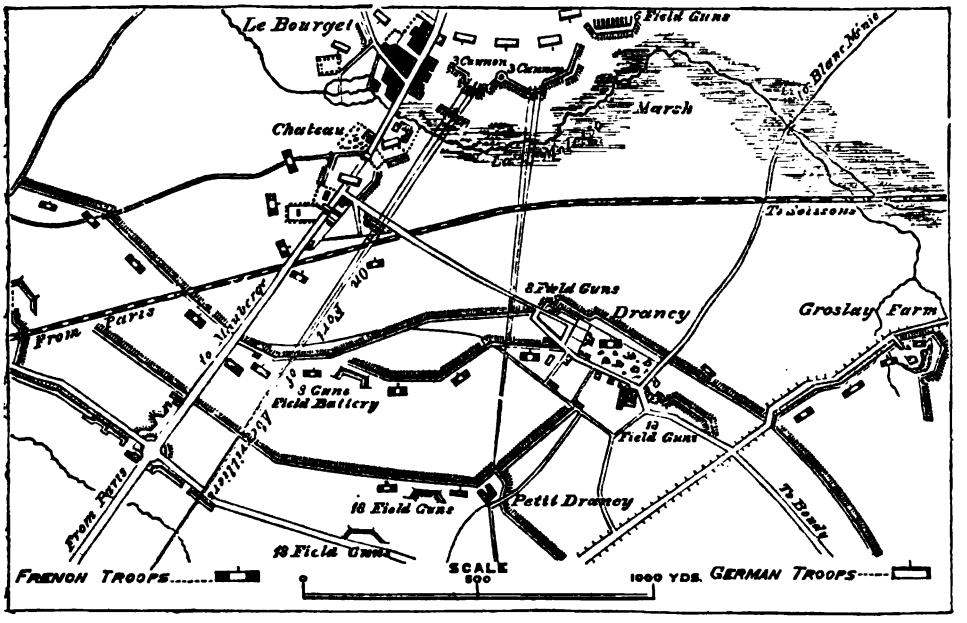
"But, as if our ill-fortune had resolved to crush us, something more sinister and painful than the fall of Paris has come upon us. Unknown to us, without informing us, and without consulting us, an armistice has been signed, of which we have but too late learned the guilty thoughtlessness which surrenders to the Prussian troops departments occupied by our soldiers, and imposes upon us the obligation to remain inactive for three weeks in order to convoke a National Assembly under the sad circumstances in which our country finds itself. We have demanded an explanation from Paris, and have kept silence, while awaiting, before addressing you, the promised arrival of a member of the Government to whom we had determined to remit our powers as members of the Delegate Government. We were willing thus to obey, in order to give proof of moderation and good faith, and in order to fulfil our duty, which consists in not leaving our posts until we have been relieved of them, and also to prove to all friends and adversaries, by our examples, that Democracy is at once the greatest of all political parties, and also the most scrupulous of Governments. Nobody, however, has come from Paris, and we must act, and at any price upset the perfidious calculations of the enemies of France. Prussia reckons on the armistice. Prussia hopes that the National Assembly, convoked after successive defeats, and while the dreadful impression of the fall of Paris prevails, will be necessarily trembling, and ready to accept a shameful peace. It rests with you that these calculations should fail—that the means prepared to crush the spirit of resistance should lead to a contrary result. Let us establish a school of instruction for our young troops; let us employ these three weeks in preparing and pushing on with more ardour than ever the organisation of defence and of war. Instead of a reactionary and cowardly Assembly, of which the foreigner dreams, let us summon a really national and Republican one, which desires peace, if peace secures honour, rank, and integrity to our country, but which would also be determined to wage war, and to be ready for anything, rather than assist at the assassination of France.

"Frenchmen! Let us think of our fathers who bequeathed to us France, compact and indivisible Let us not alienate our inheritance into the hands of barbarians. Who would sign it? Not you, Legitimists, who have so boldly fought beneath the banners of the Republic to defend the territory of the ancient



GERMAN HUSSARS.

kingdom of France; nor you, descendants of the citizens of 1789, whose masterpiece it was to seal the old provinces into an indissoluble union. It is not we, the working men of the towns, whose intelligence and generous patriotism have always been the representatives of France in her strength and unity, as a people initiating modern liberties; nor you, labouring men of the country, who have never withheld your blood in defence of the revolution to which you owe your property in land, and the dignity of citizens. No! Not one Frenchman will be found to sign this infamous



SORTIE ON LE BOURGET, JANUARY 13TH, 1871.

Similar sorties were made on the Saxon line at Bondy, and in advance of Fort Issy, south of Paris. They were ineffective.

pact. The foreigner will be deceived. He will be compelled to relinquish the idea of mutilating France, because we are all inspired by the same love for our mother-country, and are unmoved by defeats. We shall again become strong, and we shall expel the foreigner. To achieve this sacred object we must devote our hearts, our wills, and our lives. We must all rally round the Republic, and above all prove our calmness and firmness of soul. Let us have neither passions nor weaknesses. Let us simply swear as free men to defend before and against everybody France and the Republic. To arms! To arms! Long live France! Long live the Republic, one and indivisible!

"LÉON GAMBETTA."

To put its case yet more strongly before the public, the Delegate Government communicated to the country a note in which the effects of the armistice on the fortunes of the Army of the East were pointed out. It was here stated that a double strategical movement was in process of development. The Army of the East was acting on one side; on the other, General Garibaldi, recently reinforced to the number of 50,000 men, had commenced a diversion in force in the rear of the enemy, advancing towards Dôle and the forest of Chane. "Had this movement ended as successfully as it began," said the note, "the Prussian troops might have been placed in a very critical situation between two fires. The Army of the East, however, suspended its operations, and the army of General Garibaldi halted within three kilomètres of Dôle, which had been almost completely evacuated by the enemy. During the two following days, while the French generals were negotiating with the enemy to clear up what seemed to be a misunderstanding, the enemy continued to advance (sending considerable reinforcements against Garibaldi), occupied important positions, and rendered it impossible for the French army to pursue its original plan. When the full text of the armistice became known, General Garibaldi was obliged to evacuate Dijon and to fall back on Macon, and the Army of the East was compelled to enter Swiss territory, with the exception of the Twenty-fourth Corps, forming the left wing, which succeeded in escaping the pursuit of the enemy." Wild as was its language, the Delegate Government was not without supporters. The Municipal Council of Bordeaux, the Committee of Defence of the Gironde, and most of the southern cities, upheld the martial resolutions

of M. Gambetta, and called for a struggle to the death. They forgot that the struggle to the death had already been fought, and that the result was against France. M. Gambetta's shriek of defiance was of a piece with M. Jules Favre's unfortunate declaration in September, "We will not cede either an inch of our territory or a stone of our fortresses;" but it had far less justification in the altered circumstances of the time. The reliance of the Delegate Government on its beaten armies was an extravagant instance of that kind of fanaticism which is closely allied to conscious deception. Nothing more could be done against an enemy who profited as much by his opponents' errors as by his own strength, and valour, and intellectual supremacy.

CHAPTER XVII.

Burning of St. Cloud by the Germans—The Empire and Peace—Reappearance of "Monsieur N.," or M. Regnier—His Negotiations with Count Bismarck—Prince Joinville and M. Gambetta—General d'Aurelles de Paladines—Letter of M. Guizot to Mr. Gladstone—Futility of Moral Force Interventions—Letter of M. Jules Favre to M. Gambetta on the Capitulation of Paris—Revolutionary Manifestation—Murder of a Police Agent by the Mob—Rescue of Prisoners from Sainte Pélagie—Condition of the Forts after the Bombardment—Visit of the Emperor William to Mont Valérien—The Guns of Fort Issy—Starving Condition of the Peasantry—The Village of Bondy—The Cry of "Treason"—State of Fort Rosny—The Military Position of France at the Time of the Armistice—Garibaldi's Charges of Cruelty against the Prussians—Possible Exaggerations—The "Besieged Resident" on German Rapacity—Frivolity of the Parisians—Excitement in Berlin at the News of the Armistice—Approaching Termination of the War.

DURING the earlier stages of the armistice negotiations, the Prussians went on with their military work, as if determined to make the most of the time that remained to them. The bombardment of Paris was continued with great energy, and on the night of January 24th twenty-two persons were struck, either in their houses or in the streets. On the following night the shells also fell thickly, but only a few persons were hurt. Early on the morning of January 26th, the town of St. Cloud was set on fire by the Germans, to prevent the houses affording cover to the French, in case of their making another sortie to the west. The fine historically interesting palace of St. Cloud had been burnt down by the French themselves on the 13th of October, 1870, when it was shelled by Mont Valérien, because it was considered to be a post of vantage to the enemy. Since that time, the little town had been deserted by all but the German outposts and a few poverty-stricken people. Previous to setting fire to the place on the 26th of January, the German soldiers made an examination of the houses to see if any people were lurking there; and in the cellar of one dwelling they found a girl of eighteen, who had hidden herself with the intention of perishing in the flames, in preference to leaving her home. She was saved, but the whole town was destroyed. Considering that negotiations for an armistice were then proceeding, that there was a strong probability that peace would soon be concluded, and that it was hardly possible for the French to make any more sorties (as the Germans must by that time have been aware), the destruction of the town seems a piece of wanton barbarity. So extreme a measure could only be justified by the most obvious necessity; and no such necessity existed at the time when St. Cloud was committed to the flames.

The much-debated question as to who was most entitled to make peace on behalf of France was again raised during the negotiations at Versailles; and it was asserted that the terms of an agreement had been discussed between the Emperor Napoleon and Count Bismarck. This, however, was denied in the London newspaper, the *Observer*, which, apparently speaking with authority, said that the Emperor had not deviated from the rule of conduct which he prescribed for himself after the capitulation of Sedan. Being in captivity, his Majesty held himself incapacitated to exercise any Imperial function, and he therefore referred everything to the Regency. Count Bismarck had not at any time, either directly or indirectly, negotiated or offered to negotiate for the restoration of the Imperial Government. "But," continued the paragraph to which we are referring, "through the co-operation of the Emperor, or rather the Empress-Regent, the Imperial Chancellor has endeavoured to remove the obstacles that bar the way to peace. The Government of the National Defence, it is alleged, has no lawful authority to act for the French nation, and the Germans object to conclude a treaty of peace with an agent not

duly and formally authorised. This difficulty was foreseen, and therefore Count Bismarck was anxious for the convocation of a National Assembly, and offered facilities for its election. The Government of the National Defence decided that a valid election could not take place while the country was invaded. Two courses have been suggested. One is that M. Jules Favre should, as the *de facto* Foreign Minister of France, enter upon negotiations, and, in the event of an agreement, the Imperial Regency should be asked to authorise the Treaty. By these means both the *de facto* and the *de jure* Governments would be represented, and Germany would be satisfied. This plan has been abandoned. The other course is that the Government of the National Defence should consent to the resumption of authority by the Imperial Regency, on the condition that within three months after peace is concluded a National Assembly shall be elected to decide upon the form and personality of the Government. It is urged that by this plan a serious obstacle to the restoration of peace will be removed, while the French nation will have a speedy opportunity of choosing a Government. These ideas do not emanate from the Emperor or the Empress-Regent." At the same time, the mysterious "Monsieur N.," or M. Regnier, whose intrigues with Count Bismarck, Marshal Bazaine, General Bourbaki, and others, during the siege of Metz, were related in the first volume of this History (Chapter XIV.), reappeared on the stage, and on the 19th of January had an interview with Count Bismarck at Versailles. Before re-opening his negotiations, M. Regnier addressed the following letter to the Count :—

"Sidmouth Lodge, Dec. 19, 1870.

"Monsieur le Comte, — When we declared war against you, we made but one mistake—that of not having arranged beforehand to be the conquerors. Every mistake has to be paid for, and we will pay for ours. In order to know the price, we must at least enter into communication with each other. My opinion is that you will not now ask more than you would have accepted at the end of September. But with us no prince or leader can himself decide to treat for peace, for fear lest his signature should be ascribed to his desire of obtaining power. 'Help yourself, and God will help you,' says our fabulist. We must, then, ourselves take our own business into our own hands. That is why I—who am only an isolated private individual, who belong to no party, but who really love my country and my countrymen, and who can therefore despise calumny—ask you if I may use, for the purpose of visiting Versailles, the safe-conduct which I had previously obtained from you. There I shall request you to point out to me one of our departments occupied by you which your strategical position may allow you to abandon. As soon as one or more shall have been indicated to me, I shall go thither, and I think I may be certain that, after four or five days' public meetings, I shall be able to convey to you the demand of one of these departments, in order that I may obtain from you its evacuation by your forces, and its neutralisation by the belligerent armies. Within a fortnight the cry for peace will be such, and will be heard throughout so great a part of France, that its realisation cannot long be delayed. The moderate people of all parties who may join in it will attain this result, so desirable for all, by the establishment of separate committees, having the same purpose. Paris will stretch out her hand to them, and peace may be signed without its being necessary for you to enter the modern Athens by force, or to destroy it by a horrible bombardment. You will not, Monsieur le Comte, by a refusal, give a semblance of reason to those who assert that you rejoice at being unable to find anybody with whom to treat, in order that you may destroy my poor country for ever. No, that is not true, I am sure; and, moreover, your mothers and orphans in Germany—have they not every day, like ours, more sons and fathers to weep for?—I have the honour, &c.,

"J. V. REGNIER."

No obstacles being placed in the way of M. Regnier, he went to Versailles, and in the interview of January 19th explained his views at great length. The German Chancellor promised to take into consideration the suggestion for neutralising a department on the Belgian frontier; but he required that M. Regnier should act in the name of some party. This was refused, M. Regnier declaring that peace ought not to be signed by any party, but by the nation, which could afterwards choose its form of government. It was agreed that, supposing such a Government to be established, its title should be "The Provisional Government of the National Existence," with the motto, "For arriving at the end." But Count Bismarck still required the identification of the movement with some party; and on M. Regnier persistently declining this arrangement, he was dismissed very curtly. On reaching his hotel, he found himself watched by two police officers; but Count Bismarck afterwards denied all knowledge of these agents.*

It will be seen that, whoever M. Regnier was acting for, he began his second attempt as a peacemaker long before Paris was prepared to surrender, and that he was even in communication with the German Chancellor four days before M. Jules Favre sought the Prussian head-quarters. Had M. Gambetta been aware of these intrigues, he would have found in them matter for his warmest denunciations. As it was, he was frequently in terror of dynastic

* Correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*.

movements; and he reaped some unpopularity in certain quarters by the summary method with which he dealt with the Prince de Joinville, third son of Louis Philippe. The Prince had gone to France in the course of the autumn for the purpose of offering his services to d'Aurelles de Paladines; but the general did not like to accept them without the consent of the Delegate Government. Accordingly, the Prince remained with the army as a simple spectator, and then went to the camp at Conlie, where he offered his services to General Chanzy, and was again refused. While staying in the camp, he was arrested by police officials from Bordeaux, and conveyed to that town, where he was interrogated, and kept in secret confinement for six days. M. Thiers interposed, and procured the liberation of the Orleans Prince; but he was even then escorted by gendarmes to St. Malo, and shipped to England. He is reported to have remarked, "I did not expect such treatment from M. Gambetta. I remember the time—and it is not very long ago—when he dined with us at Claremont. How office alters manners! Tell him that I shall expect him soon in England." The annoyance of the Prince was but natural; yet M. Gambetta was not without grounds of justification in what he did. The appearance of Prince Joinville in France at such a crisis had too much the appearance of an intrigue for the restoration of the Orleanists to be permitted by any Government not desiring that restoration. No Government can be fairly expected to sanction a conspiracy, or what may be a conspiracy, against itself. The Republicans, who asserted on their own behalf, during their days of tribulation, the most unlimited rights of plotting and sedition, were not slow to discover the inconvenience of the doctrine when they were themselves in power. But their inconsistency in this respect was perhaps no greater than that of all other parties in a country where every party is alternately the proscriber and the proscribed.

The association of Prince Joinville with d'Aurelles de Paladines was in itself a suspicious circumstance. A romantic rumour spoke of the general as an Orleanist Prince in disguise; and, although this no doubt was an idle tale, de Paladines was an Orleanist in politics. After his removal from the command of the Army of the Loire, he felt very strongly against M. Gambetta; and, on being requested, some weeks later, to resume the command of that army, he sharply replied:—

"Monsieur le Ministre,—I have had the honour of receiving your letter by express. I place my country before everything; and, notwithstanding the annoyances and the disgust which I have experienced, I am ready to resume the command of an army corps. But I will not hold this command save under a regular Government, whose first act shall have been to bring to trial the ambitious and incapable men who have destroyed France.—Receive, Monsieur le Ministre, the assurance of my deep consideration.

"D'AURELLES DE PALADINES."

While Count Bismarck and M. Favre were negotiating at Versailles, M. Guizot, from the serenity of his unofficial retirement, was endeavouring to influence Mr. Gladstone to give the countenance of the British Government to the cause of France. In a very long communication to the English Premier, published towards the end of January, the aged French statesman reviewed the course of French policy in modern times, and, while admitting that it had often been mistaken, and that Napoleon III. in particular had engaged in many unjustifiable intrigues, and provoked the war with Germany, contended that the character of the struggle had altered since Sedan, and that the balance of European power, menaced by the encroachments of Prussia, was a question which England ought to take into serious consideration. Pursuing this theme, he asked:—

"My dear Mr. Gladstone, will you not take up the cause of the balance of power and the maintenance of peace in Europe? Will you not defend them against ambitious despots and conquerors? Surely in the nineteenth century this would be the grand, the natural, and the historic duty of England. For fifteen years, in your noble struggle on their behalf, you had France for an adversary; for the future (may I not rather say now?) you have her as an ally. Modern France has had her feverish dreams of ambition and conquest. She has paid dearly for them, and a dark fate still frowns upon her; the sins of her past are visited upon her when their season is over, when they only seemed to recur for a moment that she might prove she had renounced them. I grant that in this ardent and impetuous nation there are still traces of the old tastes and old faults. She is easily led astray by brilliant novelty and by the pomp and glory of arms. Nevertheless, this is not now her real inclination and her true meaning; it is only the movement that still disturbs the surface of the ocean when the tempest is ended. The real and earnest desire of France now is for peace and the development of her fruitful industry. France is a country of assiduous agricultural, industrial, and commercial work; a country in which we find practical and scientific civilisation, a strong vitality, and yet love of peace. She now wants time to reap the fruit of her past experience, and to learn the value of that political freedom for which she has not ceased to sigh for three-fourths of a century, although she has never known how to use it or to keep it. In such a path England is her most natural and valuable ally. And so, in spite of all recollection of

ancient rivalry and struggle, the tendency of every Government since 1815, which has been more than a passing shadow, has been to cultivate the alliance of England. You had good reason to expect it from the restored monarchy. It owed much to you, and remembered its obligations with independence and dignity. The Government of 1830 owed you nothing, and yet also made the English alliance the principal consideration of its foreign policy. There were two occasions only on which it departed from this line of conduct—in Egypt and Spain; but this was unintentional, and it hastened to retrace its steps. Even the Second Empire, in spite of its many opposing interests and continual vacillations and diplomatic conspiracies, also wished to secure England as an ally. On nearly every great question which arose, and in nearly every great event which happened, during that period, the two countries thought and acted together. In 1827 they had together protected Greece against Turkey, and in 1854 they together protected Turkey against Russia, and their flags floated side by side at Sebastopol, as they had done at Navarino. From 1830 to 1833, they together established Belgium, maintained the independence of Switzerland and Piedmont, and watched over the first beginnings of constitutional monarchy in Spain. These facts have not been mere accidents, dictated by the fantasy of the different Governments. They have been the natural and necessary results of the true interests and deep convictions of the two nations. They need not demand any great sacrifice of each other, and they can render each other great services. One thing I tell you—although France has become peaceful instead of warlike, her pride and her prowess are not weaker than of old; she will show the same ardour of heroic courage in her self-defence that she formerly showed in aggression. Although her present position is difficult and sad enough, surely she does not show herself an exacting or embarrassing ally. If the two nations can only understand each other—if each can only learn the full value of the other, and of their united strength—they may yet secure the peace of Europe as well as their own prosperity. They may acquire an added glory which will cost the present generation neither blood nor tears, and they may bequeath to future generations a heritage blessed to receive, for it will not be weighted by the undying hatred of a whole nation, and its fierce thirst for vengeance."

Yet, while thus soliciting the support of England, M. Guizot did not ask that she should go to war with Germany. He merely desired that she should protest strongly against the policy of dismemberment which Prussia was bent on carrying out towards France. "Are we," he asked, "so completely under the dominion of material power, whether it be the power of a popular revolution or of a military despotism, that we have lost all faith in moral influence, and in the supremacy of right, justice, and humanity, unless they are represented by armed hosts? Can it be true that these sacred names are powerless? and is it seemly for a great nation, a great Government, to acknowledge and openly state that it has no influence, and will not be heard on any subject, unless it launches its men-of-war, and sends out armies equipped for battle?" General Trochu had obtained undisputed authority in Paris by dint of moral force alone; and M. Guizot could not believe that Europe, including Prussia, would be more deaf to the moral influence of England than Paris had been to that of Trochu. "England," said M. Guizot, "need not fear that, unless she intervenes actively in the present war, her protest in favour of peace will be in vain. When she has resolutely put forth all her moral influence, if she should find it insufficient to curb the ambition of Prussia, she will still hold a very valuable political weapon. She may declare that if the conditions imposed upon France are such as to render solid and lasting peace impossible, the English Government will not recognise any territorial changes which may result from those conditions, and that she will stand aloof from any readjustment which must necessarily disturb the peace and order of Europe. It cannot be doubted that such an attitude would greatly discourage Prussian ambition, and greatly encourage the resistance of France."

Such were the views of this eminent and experienced statesman on the question of the approaching peace. It is needless to say that they had no influence on the policy of England. To have assumed a position of vehement hostility to the well-understood intentions of Prussia, while at the same time hanging back from supporting that position by an appeal to arms, would simply have had the effect of irritating all Germany, and humiliating ourselves, without in the slightest degree benefiting France. M. Guizot showed less than his usual discrimination in suggesting that, because General Trochu had by moral influence succeeded in establishing a power which everybody felt to be a necessity of the time, Prussia would consent to give up what she believed, or professed to believe, an indispensable security against future attack, because we uttered a number of obvious truisms about humanity, justice, international law, the spirit of aggression, and the lust of conquest. Republican sympathisers in England demanded war with Prussia simply because France was a Republic, and Republics must not be profaned by monarchical soldiers. But cooler-headed and more reasonable men, forming the great majority, bore in mind the fact that France had commenced the war, though probably in its first causes it had been equally provoked by both sides; and, while the

rapacity and hardness of Prussia were rapidly depriving her of the sympathy which she had so readily obtained from this country in July and August, it was felt that to take up arms on behalf of France would be certain to convert the contest from a local to a general war, with very problematical results as to the future state of Europe.



A VICTIM OF THE SIEGE.

The whole course of events showed but too plainly that there was no hope for France but in complete submission to the Prussian terms, however severe those terms might be. M. Gambetta and the more extreme Republicans still raved of resistance; but at Paris the necessity of seeking peace became every day more clear to men in office. M. Jules Favre, in a communication to M. Gambetta, written on the 23rd of January, just before he set out for Versailles, spoke in a tone of the deepest depression, while not absolutely prejudging the question of peace. He here stated that, after the failure of the last great sortie, Paris manifested with increasing irritation its anger against General Trochu. M. Favre had on several occasions insisted on the general's withdrawal from the command; but he had only obtained the support of M. Picard. After the 19th, he again made ineffectual attempts to press vigorous measures



SURPRISED.

on his colleagues, and to bring the general to a resolution; but Trochu declared that further resistance was impossible, though at the same time professing his readiness to yield his post to any officer holding a contrary opinion. When, however, the same question was put to a convocation of the most enterprising generals, they all returned the same answer. Continuing his explanations to M. Gambetta, M. Favre said:—

"We shall only treat for Paris; as for France, we do not claim any right for ourselves but the right of calling a National Assembly, all other questions being reserved. For this, an armistice would be necessary; it would also benefit you, and should be accepted. In two days' time the truth must at any cost be told to Paris, which remains in ignorance, feeding on its own illusions, and eager to continue the struggle. It will be a fearful and most perilous crisis, and I do not know how we shall get through it.

"My heart is broken, my dear friend. I never could foresee that such a disaster was in store for the end of my life; and I hardly know whether I shall live through this ordeal. If I do, I shall never be consoled. At least, my aim would be to preserve for my country institutions that would permit of its profiting by these portentous calamities, and would effect its regeneration. But this too is a dream; still, we may attempt to realise it. We are all of us very unhappy; but we do not think of recriminating, and we think recrimination against ourselves equally unjust and impolitic."

The Parisian populace were little inclined to accept the conclusions which to men in office appeared, and doubtless were, unavoidable. A rising in the streets took place on the 24th of January, when the mob demanded more sorties, and raised shouts of "To Berlin! to Berlin!" It was necessary for the troops to fire on the people before this movement could be suppressed; but it was a feeble attempt, compared with many by which the streets of Paris have been dismally distinguished. On the 26th, some manifestations were made in commemoration of the anniversary of the Revolution of 1848. At least 20,000 people assembled in the Place de la Bastille, and throughout the day detachments of National Guards marched up to deposit wreaths of *immortelles* on the pedestal of the column erected in honour of the Revolution of July, 1830, and to defile upon the Place. During the morning a very tragical event occurred. A crowd was seen following with frantic cries a respectably-dressed man, who was being held by two chasseurs-à-pied. He was accused of being a police-spy, and shouts were raised for at once putting him to death. His captors forced him in the direction of the canal; but, on nearing a police-post, some of the crowd, wishing to save the poor man's life, pushed him inside, and the officer in command of two National Guards stationed there caused the gates to be shut. All, however, was in vain. The two chasseurs scaled the gate, opened it, and admitted the mob, who dragged forth the supposed spy, and assailed him with kicks and blows. Seeing that all hope of mercy was at an end, he entreated that he might be allowed to blow his brains out. This was denied; his legs and arms were bound with cords, and he was thrown into the Seine. The pilots of two river steamboats endeavoured to rescue him by throwing out ropes; but they were threatened by the mob, and obliged to desist. In a little while the unhappy man sank, and the crowd dispersed without any arrests being made. On the night following the same day, some armed detachments of the National Guards went to the prison of Sainte Pélagie, and required the release of two of their body who had been condemned to imprisonment for participation in the military riots of October 31st. The governor of the gaol, not being in a position to resist the demand, which was accompanied by a threat of shooting him, yielded to it, and the men were given up. A short time before, a member of one of the political clubs had recommended the establishment of anarchy as the ruling power. His desire was now pretty nearly accomplished.

After the cessation of the bombardment, great curiosity was felt by many to see the state of the forts. The Paris correspondent of the *Morning Post*, describing a visit to some of them, said that the ground, as he approached Fort Vanvres, was so thickly strewn with fragments of shells that he could not walk his horse between them without touching them at every step. The trees were cut short by the iron shower that had beaten on them, and the ground was ploughed up into long furrows and deep holes. The fort was very much knocked about, and the two stone barracks were utterly ruined. During the worst part of the bombardment, the fort received shells at the rate of 240 per hour, or 5,700 per day. It was believed that between fifty and sixty thousand in all had been projected at the works; yet the whole loss of life was only twenty killed and rather more than eighty wounded. The cannon, however, had suffered greatly; but the ramparts were not seriously damaged anywhere, and, on the whole, the fort, although the most exposed of all to the Prussian fire, was in a good state of defence. At Fort Issy the barracks were utterly burnt out. The walls of the fort were at one part broken into atoms, and lay in ruins in the ditch; but in other respects it

was untouched. Here also several guns had been dismounted, though not so many as at Vanvres. The forts were taken possession of by the Germans, in accordance with the terms of the armistice convention. Mont Valérien was entered on the morning of Feb. 26th. It was found to be empty and desolate, and the German soldiers were disappointed at not discovering any food there. The Emperor William visited the fort in the course of the day. He rode in a carriage drawn by four black horses, preceded by a few Hussars, and followed by Dragoons. His arrival created great excitement among the German troops, and he returned their greeting with much heartiness. The fortress is one of the most imposing of those round Paris. It is situated on a high and steep hill, and can only be approached by difficult and winding paths. The base of the hill is regularly fortified with a ditch, counterscarp, and glacis; and on the summit are barracks and batteries for long-range guns. The largest of the guns, which was originally intended for marine use, had a small circular work to itself, and could be pointed against Versailles, or St. Germain, or the flat ground beyond the Seine, close to Bezons, according to the pleasure of its possessors.

An extraordinary collection of guns was found in Fort Issy. The correspondent of the *Daily News*, attached to the head-quarters of the Crown Prince of Prussia, related that he saw there cannon and mortars, ships' guns and battery-guns, new rifled guns of the latest pattern, and old smooth-bores which had been recently rifled. Some of the larger cannon had had their carriages depressed in rear by sinking a hole under them a foot or more deep, and had thus attained an elevation of thirty-five degrees, which gave them a very long range. To each of these guns, tables of distances were attached, having reference to various landmarks. From a letter of Dr. Russell's to the *Times*, it appears that the hill on which Fort Valérien stands is honeycombed with quarry-shafts, and that these had been converted into mines, which were removed on the night of the capitulation. In making his way to the fort on Feb. 26th, Dr. Russell saw many evidences of the utterly disheartened mood of the people, and the devastated appearance of the country. "The road," he said, "soon became bad indeed, for the ruts of the French gun-wheels had cut it up in milder weather, and it was now frozen hard. The column in front, which was entering the fort, had come out from the direction of Rueil, and by judicious driving we got up with the tail of it just where the road to Suresnes turns off to the right. But there was a trial in store. In front of some three or four houses, apart on the road-side below the south face of the fort, there was a group of women and children and two men. As we drew up to ask a question, which was civilly answered, they all regarded us very eagerly; and when one of the women inquired if we could give them anything to eat, they looked like wolves, and there was a cry from them all, 'We are ready to die of hunger.' 'Had they lived there all during the fighting?' 'Yes; and they had had wounded men in their houses, and had helped a Prussian officer.' 'How they had suffered!' And then an old lady said something about 'only seeing a leg of mutton again.' What a life indeed, under the roar of the guns of Valérien, and starving for four long months! But we had to pass on, with a promise that we would bring them food to-morrow, which evoked a shower of blessings as we came up with the column, the rear brought up by men carrying odd articles of food, clothing, and utensils, in strange vehicles—one man wheeling a perambulator, another a Bath chair, others barrows, all against the slope of the atrocious road which the French had just left in a state of utter disrepair, flinging loads of unbroken stones into the principal ruts." On the whole, it would seem that the French forts, though a good deal damaged in several places, were very far from having been rendered untenable, and that any attempt to storm them would have been attended by terrific loss, besides, in all probability, proving unsuccessful.

The village of Bondy, which had endured much in the course of the siege, presented a lamentable appearance. Every house in it had been injured; some were completely in ruins. The place was deserted and silent, and it seemed as if nothing could restore it to its former condition of prosperity. All this had been effected by the German siege-works at Raincy. The high road from Bondy to Paris had suffered equally in another way. Up to the time of the investment, this road was bordered with stately trees, which had now been cut down, so that the trunks lay prostrate on the road. In conversing with the villagers and others whom he met, one of the correspondents of the *Times* found the old talk about "treason" as rife as ever. He was asked whether every one in England did not know that they had been "sold." They had, indeed, according to their own view, been traitorously given over to the enemy three several times: first by the Emperor Napoleon at Sedan; then by Bazaine at Metz; and now by Jules Favre at Versailles. The French, they said, had not been beaten, nor had Paris been starved out. The markets in the capital were full of provisions. All the sorties, no doubt,

had failed; but it was owing to treason. In riding to Clichy, this writer met a procession of French carts coming from the forts, where they had been employed in removing ammunition. Nearly all of these carts (which were about thirty in number) were drawn by two horses; and the state of the poor animals was shocking to witness. "I could not have believed," said the correspondent, "that horses in such a condition could walk. They were living anatomies. Scarcely one of them had a pound of flesh on his whole carcase. Nearly all were white. Not only their bones were visible, but their veins, with the thin blood running through them, and positively making their coats appear pink rather than white. An exclamation of horror rose from every one who passed. The poor men and boys—most of them mere lads—who led them, were also starved-looking. They wore old cloaks, which were in tatters, and they seemed scarcely able to lift the wooden shoes in which they crept along. So miserable a procession I believe never before moved on earth. We all breathed more freely when we had passed it." Pursuing his journey, the correspondent arrived at Ville Evrard, where a desperate struggle occurred during the sortie of December 21st. Traces of the fight were visible on every inch of ground, and the place was utterly ruined. Coming to the forts on that side of Paris, he found them still in an excellent state of defence. It had been said that, with only one exception, all the batteries in Fort Rosny were dismounted. So far was this from being the case that the writer discovered no fewer than ninety-three guns there in position. One of the ablest of the Saxon Engineer officers pronounced this fort to be superbly defended. It was not very safe to walk about the *glacis*, because it was known that several torpedoes lay in the ground; and sappers were set to work to see that there was no communication with them, by means of which they could be exploded. Rosny, like Mont Valérien, had been mined; but a French officer pledged his honour that the Germans would not be blown up. The upper part of the barracks was greatly damaged, but the lower floors were in good condition, having been roofed with a succession of enormous beams of timber, five or six deep, through which no shells could pass. The gunners were protected by earthworks, sand-bags, and rope-screens, put saddle-wise across the guns. Of provisions there was no lack, and the store of powder appeared to be plentiful.

When the armistice was signed, the military position of France was as bad as any recorded in history; and, in spite of the rhapsodies of M. Gambetta, it was impossible to continue the war any longer. General Faidherbe, after his unsuccessful battle at St. Quentin on the 19th of January, had been unable to make a further movement, owing to the shattered and disheartened state of his army; and he now stood at Valenciennes and Douai, confronted by the victorious soldiers of Göben. The divisions commanded by Chanzy had been dispersed by the operations of Prince Frederick Charles and the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg. In the East, the legions of Bourbaki were flying terror-stricken before the pursuing forces of Werder and Manteuffel; and Paris itself had made its last effort, and failed. Of all the armies, Bourbaki's had suffered the most. The 80,000 men who crossed into Switzerland were in the last extremity of wretchedness. Starved, frost-bitten, and harassed with wasting coughs, they presented a shocking and terrible appearance. The feet of some were protected against the ice and snow only by bits of wood roughly tied on; the boots of many were soleless or heelless, so that the exposed part of the foot presented a large wound crusted with dirt. Some had lost their toes; the joints of others were frozen stiff; and for three days there had been a total failure in the commissariat. The forces of Chanzy and Faidherbe were better off than this; but they were quite incapable of taking the field. The only French army which occupied anything like a favourable position towards the enemy was that of Garibaldi. To the brave old Italian it must have been extremely painful to be obliged to relinquish military operations at the very time when he was proving his superiority over the detachment which Manteuffel had sent against him. Before leaving Dijon, he was greatly exasperated by some alleged atrocities of the Germans, committed during their unsuccessful attack on Dijon on the 21st and 22nd of January. He charged them, in a general order issued to his troops, with having beaten out the brains of wounded prisoners, slaughtered physicians, and fired on surgeons and soldiers belonging to the ambulances. He also asserted that a captain of Francs-tireurs was bound hand and foot in the château of Pauilly, and burnt alive, and that the body was afterwards discovered almost entirely consumed, except where the fetters had rested. Commenting on these dreadful allegations, Garibaldi exclaimed, apostrophising the invaders:—"Black tools of tyranny! your empire comes—the empire of the funeral pile. Your favourite period, the Middle Ages, again appears, and your fallen hero of Sedan, with Satan's smile on his lips; you turn your viper's eyes to the new Emperor, sullied by blood and torture. The exasperation of the proud combatants of the Re-

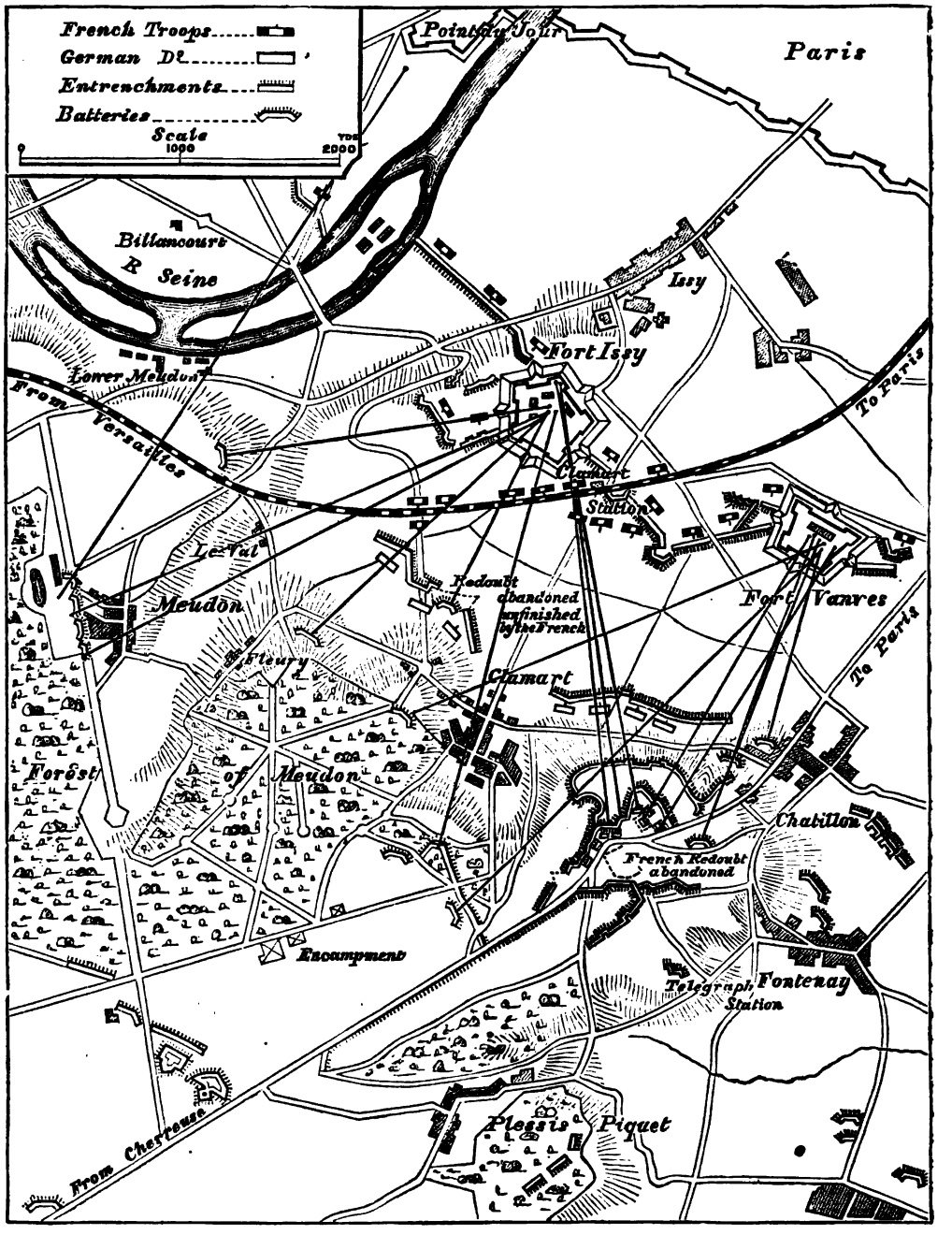
public has risen to a high pitch. I shall do my utmost to prevent them resorting to reprisals. I hope, however, that Europe and the whole world will recognise the upright and magnanimous conduct of the sons of the Republic, and will take note of the bestial demeanour and infamy of the soldiers of a despot." The story about the burning alive of the Franc-tireur was supported by the testimony of a casual correspondent of the *Daily News*, who said that he had actually seen the body; that there was evidence of the unhappy man having been roasted over a slow fire while secured to a beam; and that a Prussian military doctor then in Dijon was present with him to verify the fact, and was so overcome as to be unable to speak a word. Nevertheless, it appeared from subsequent inquiries that there was reason for doubting the accuracy of this ghastly tale. It is to be hoped, for the credit of our common nature, that the explanations afterwards given by the Germans represented the simple facts of the case.

With regard to the atrocities frequently alleged by each side against the other, a German military physician, writing from Chaumont on the 16th of January, suggested the comforting reflection that many of the barbarities imputed were inventions or exaggerations, and that sometimes each belligerent told tales to his own discredit out of mere bravado. From November to January he had had, he stated, many opportunities of observing the humane treatment of prisoners and wounded by the French. He then proceeded to relate:—

"A Hussar was fired at while on patrol duty, and, with his comrade, took to flight, pursued by the cries of the inhabitants, but soon, exhausted by loss of blood, fell down on the road. After a few hours, the priest of a neighbouring village came and took him into his house until he was sufficiently recovered to return to Chaumont. Another Hussar, wounded under similar circumstances, fell into the hands of the enemy, but, instead of being killed outright, as he expected, he was carefully conveyed to a village, and well lodged and fed till, on the third day, his comrades came and liberated him. A patrol, consisting of six men, was surprised while reconnoitring the railway between Chaumont and Château Vilain on Christmas Day, and three of them shot. One of the survivors reported that he had seen one of the bodies, and that the French had cut the man's throat; but this was found to be quite untrue. In the surprise of Châtillon by Garibaldians, which has been so often referred to, no German soldiers had their heads cut off, as has been alleged. So far from any barbarity being displayed, one of the officers, found lying under his horse severely wounded, was taken by an inhabitant into his house, and carefully attended to. While unmerited odium has thus been cast on the French, German soldiers, in their letters home, sometimes relate cruelties on their own part which are equally destitute of foundation. A recent description of thirty captured Francs-tireurs being obliged to dig their own graves, and then being shot, is quite unknown at the *locus in quo*. Another letter stated that, as punishment for an attack on a requisitioning party, an entire village was put to the sword, 'even infants in the cradle.' The fact is that forty, or according to another account eighty, houses were burnt down; but there was no massacre. Whenever anybody is shot by the German authorities, the fact, after due investigation and trial, is officially placarded for the information of the people, with the ground on which the penalty was inflicted. The Commandant of Longwy, according to the boast of some French papers, had placed fifty-one German prisoners in a position where they would be most exposed to the bombardment, the truth being that he gave them up to the besiegers, with a request that an equal number of French captives might be handed over to him, which was, of course, complied with."

An officer of high rank at the German headquarters spoke even more strongly, as far as his own countrymen were concerned, on the same subject; but he cast great blame on the French. It had never come to his ears, or to those of any of his acquaintances, that a German soldier had ill-treated a Frenchwoman. He admitted that here and there a German, fired on from houses or from ambush, had imitated the enemy; but he contended that many of the acts of the latter had been attributed to the Germans. "As evidence of the discipline of our troops," he continued, "I may mention that while in France I have not, with the exception of a single case at Nancy, seen a drunken German soldier, while the French, as reported by their own officers, are almost always, to a large extent, drunk, and are then addicted to excesses of all kinds." It is highly probable that many of the alleged cases of brutality were untrue, or considerably over-coloured; yet, unless all evidence be devoid of value—even evidence coming from numerous and independent sources—it cannot be questioned that many acts of signal atrocity were committed on both sides. The "officer of rank" certainly took too flattering a view of the conduct of his German fellows. His patriotism misled him, as patriotism is apt to do. Still, it must be admitted that, for the most part, the German system was more in fault than the German soldier. The discipline of the army was remarkable; but a method of terrorism, such as hardly acknowledged any bounds, was pursued throughout the invaded districts, with the avowed design of quelling resistance and enforcing submission.

The "Besieged Resident" of the *Daily News*—whose cynical wit, however, must be taken with



SORTIE ON CLAMART, 13TH JANUARY, 1871.

Showing also the Prussian lines before Forts Issy and Vanvres. The French advanced beyond the railway at Clamart, but were speedily checked.

some abatements—was exceedingly bitter against the Prussians for their conduct towards the vanquished nation. He described them as "military squires" who held the destinies of France and Germany in their hands. The ordinary type of a Prussian officer, he said, was a compound of a Tory squire, a Groom of the Chamber, and a Life Guardsman. He doubted if the Germans would long submit to such a horde of squires, princes, officers, and court flunkeys. Their method of dealing with the property of the French was simply piratical, according to the testimony of this witness. In Versailles, under the very eyes of the King-Emperor, there was a street in which almost

every house was absolutely gutted. "The Prussian army," continued Mr. Labouchere, "may have many excellent qualities, but chivalry is not among them. War with them is a business. When a nation is conquered, there is to be no sentimental pity for it, but as much is to be made out of it as possible. Like the elephant, which can crush a tree or pick up a needle, they conquer a province and they pick a pocket. As soon as a Prussian is quartered in a room, he sends for a box and some straw; then carefully and methodically packs up the clock on the mantelpiece, and all the stray ornaments which he can lay his hands on; and then, with a tear glistening in his eye for his absent family, directs them either to his mother, or his wife, or his lady-love. In vain the proprietor protests: the philosophical warrior utters the most noble sentiments respecting the horrors of war; ponderously explains that the French do not sufficiently appreciate the blessings of peace; and that he is one of the humble instruments whose mission it is to make these blessings clear to them. Then he rings the bell, and, in a mild, gentle voice, orders his box of loot to be carried off by his military servant." The same amusing writer alleged that these redoubtable warriors had long rods which they thrust into the ground to see whether anything of value had been buried in the gardens. Sometimes they confiscated a house, and re-sold it to the proprietor; sometimes they carted off the furniture. Pianofortes they were particularly fond of appropriating. "They are a



A FORCIBLE ENTRY.

singular mixture," averred the "Besieged Resident," "of bravery and meanness. No one can deny that they possess the former quality; but they are courageous without one spark of heroism. After fighting all day for Fatherland, they will rifle the corpses of their fallen foes of every article they can lay their hands on, and will return to their camp equally happy because they have won a great victory for Fatherland, and stolen a watch from one of the enemies of Fatherland. They have got now into such a habit of appropriating other people's property, that I confess I tremble when one of them fixes his cold glassy eyes upon me. I see that he is meditating some new philosophical doctrine, which, some way or other, will transfer what is in my pocket into his. His mind, however, fortunately, works but slowly, and I am far away from him before he has elaborated to his own satisfaction a system of confiscation applicable to me." In quitting France, Mr. Labouchere experienced, at the hands of the Prussians at the Amiens station, what he describes as unmitigated ruffianism. He was travelling with a number of Frenchmen, and seems to have been mistaken for one of the conquered nation. The French, he says, were knocked and pushed about, and treated with as much contempt and brutality as negro slaves. For himself, he could not stand on any spot for two minutes without being gruffly ordered to stand on another by some officer; and twice two soldiers raised their muskets, as if with a design of beating out his brains. The *animus* of this observer was very strong; yet the imputed conduct is so like that of conquering armies generally that it is probable the picture was not greatly heightened.

While the "Besieged Resident" was denouncing the ferocity of the Germans, a correspondent of the *Times* was deploring the levity of the French. This gentleman witnessed in Paris, shortly after the conclusion of the armistice, a dramatic performance founded on the burning of Châteaudun by the Germans on October 18th, 1870. The author of this piece, we are told, had shown his ingenuity by mixing up indecency, profanity, and buffoonery with the bursting of shells, and the appearance of wounded French soldiers, who died upon the stage, after uttering rhapsodies about the glory of France and the courage of her armies. Châteaudun very gallantly defended itself when attacked in the autumn, and its heroism might surely have been recognised in some graver and more seemly fashion than this wretched travesty, which nevertheless made the audience laugh and cry at once in hysterical approval. Shocked at this and other instances of incurable frivolity (the siege of Paris itself was brought on the Parisian stage), the correspondent wrote:—"Steadily refusing to recognise the abyss of degradation to which the country is being brought—conscious, so far as any outward expression of it goes, of no national humiliation—deceiving itself by a rhetoric, false alike in sentiment and in fact, which elevates follies and vices into virtues by means of cunningly devised adjectives—France mocks the Nemesis of its sins which is overtaking it. Seven months of defeat and misfortune have not diminished the number or the character of the lies which appear daily in the French newspapers, or changed the tone of the articles which continue to flatter and truckle to the popular vanity, and to attribute the disasters of the nation to a series of scapegoats which they invariably provide upon each new occasion. No one has the courage to rise up among them, and say, 'We ourselves, individually and collectively, are alone to blame for all this; and it is only by acknowledging that this is so, and that we need reform, that we can arrest the downward progress of the nation.' At this moment, France is in want rather of a prophet than a President." It is impossible to deny the truth and justice of these words. The frivolity of Paris has been the ruin of France again and again; and this frivolity, which of old affected to be nothing better, and took many pleasing and some harmless forms, has, ever since the era of the first Revolution, been peculiarly mischievous by intruding itself into the regions of politics and morals, and making pretence to be a philosopher when it is only a buffoon. When France lies under the dictation of Paris—as she does at all revolutionary seasons—she suffers from the frantic and flippant leadership. The great strength of the Second Empire lay in the fact that, without discrowning Paris as the natural and historic capital of the land (as the Versailles Assembly afterwards did), it took the whole nation as its basis, instead of flattering the vain predominance of a minority. The claim of Paris to make a revolution whenever it pleases, and impose its own ideas of government on the entire French people, has been the chief cause of the degradation of France.

The effect of the news of the armistice on the population of Berlin was of course very great. In the early part of the month, when the three provincial armies of France were commencing their last grand operations for the delivery of the capital, when the capital itself was still defiant and active, and when the bombardment had only just begun, some degree of uneasiness was felt in the Prussian metropolis, and it was wished by many that the end had arrived. The intelligence of the fall of

Paris was accordingly experienced as a relief, and the people gave themselves up to joyful congratulations. Flags were displayed in great numbers, and an attempt was made to illuminate the city; but this failed, owing to its not being supported by the public buildings. No guns were fired, the Emperor having forwarded a telegram directing that nothing more should be done in this way until the conclusion of peace. The *Cross Gazette*, commenting on the circumstance, said that if the Parisians would kindly take note of the aspect presented by Berlin on that memorable occasion, they would be convinced that the inhabitants of the hostile capital felt no personal satisfaction at their humiliation. That Paris must be captured in order to end the war, had been a fixed idea with every German; but, said the official writer, when the event came, there was no exultation. Everything remained quiet, from a mixed feeling of weariness of the war and delicacy for the vanquished. Such were the words in which Berlin sought to console the wounded pride and sullen agony of Paris. It is not to be expected that the endeavour was successful.

That the surrender of Paris, coupled with the exhausted condition of the country, would lead to a speedy peace, was seen clearly both at Berlin and Versailles. Count Bismarck, in discussing the situation with M. Favre, took care not to commit himself to any definite terms of peace; but he probably gave his interlocutor to understand that with prolonged resistance the German demands would be augmented. With their usual forethought, the German military authorities at once began making arrangements for marching against Lyons and Bordeaux, in order to be prepared for the worst, should the French really determine on continuing the unequal contest. But it was felt that this was most unlikely. M. Gambetta might rage and harangue; but it was known at the German head-quarters that France was sick of the war, and that she would hardly be galvanised into renewed activity by the most eloquent of Republicans. Germany also was weary of bloodshed, but she had the sustaining influence of success, and the all-important position of command. The desperate duel was fought out, and the beaten gladiator had no other alternative than to yield or die.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Paris thrown open—The First Stranger to enter—Condition of the City—Failure of Food and Fuel—Insufficient Defences—The St. Denis Forts—History of the Town of St. Denis—Sufferings of the People—"Paris a Grave"—Unpopularity of the English—The Bearing of the Parisians under their Misfortunes—Dissensions between the Paris and Bordeaux Ministers—Arbitrary Decrees of M. Gambetta—Protest of Paris Journalists—Opposition of Count Bismarck to the Bordeaux Decree on the Elections—M. Gambetta's Observations on the Subject—Popular Feeling at Bordeaux—Division between the South and the North of France—The Imperialists and the Republicans—Paris in Favour of Peace—M. Jules Favre on the Bordeaux Decree—Address of the Paris Government to the Nation—Arguments of M. Jules Simon at Bordeaux—Decree for the Dismissal of Judges—Irresponsible Tyranny—Agitation in the Southern Cities—Resignation of M. Gambetta—Proclamation of the Prefect of the Gironde—Another Disabilities Decree—Unwarrantable Interference with the Electors—New Red Republican Journals.

NOTHING could be more dismal than the appearance of Paris when the outer world was permitted to enter. The first stranger to penetrate into the city of silence, famine, humiliation, and gloom, was Mr. Archibald Forbes, the enterprising and graphic correspondent of the *Daily News* attached to the army of the Crown Prince of Saxony. Leaving St. Denis on the morning of January 31st, he rode through the Prussian foreposts to the neutral ground, without interruption, and so to Porte La Chapelle. The gates were closed, and, after waiting half an hour, the correspondent and several others were directed to another gate to the right, where they obtained entrance—Mr. Forbes in advance of the rest, owing to his being mounted. The enterprise was attended with no little peril. The stranger might be mistaken for a German, and subjected to murderous violence; and his nationality was in fact suspected before he had gone far. Just inside the walls Mr. Forbes encountered a mob of half-drunk National Guards, who raised a cry of "Down with the Prussian!" The exclamation was repeated by many voices, and several hands were stretched out to clutch at the rider's bridle. Mr. Forbes then thought it prudent to declare that he was an Englishman, come, if possible, to do good, not harm. At this he was allowed to ride on unmolested, and, proceeding to the heart of the city, he saw how real was the misery effected by the siege—how deep the dejection of defeat supervening on such a contest. The first Englishman he met described the situation in a brief sentence.

Paris, he said, was utterly cowed—fairly beaten. The people, however, were orderly and decent in their behaviour; self-restrained and serious. The crowds in the streets consisted almost entirely of men in uniform. Although wine was plentiful, no one was drunk, excepting the men near the gates. "The food-shops," said this writer, "had nothing to show. There were confitures and preserves, jellies, &c.; but solid comestibles were conspicuous by their absence. In one shop I saw several large shapes of stuff that looked like lard. When I asked what it was, I found it was horse-fat. The bakers' shops were closed; the grating down before the butchers'. And oh, the number of funerals! One, two, three—I met six altogether in the course of my ride. Sad with an exceeding great sadness—such was what I found as regards Paris long before I reached the American legation; self-respecting, too, in her misery; not blatant; not disposed to collect in jabbering crowds. Each man went his way with chastened face and listless gait." Mr. Forbes had in his pocket some slices of ham; and, on reaching his quarters, the servant-women asked permission to take the meagre plateful out, and show it as a curiosity to their companions.

The scarcity of food was unquestionably very great. On the 30th of January a crowd broke into the reserved store of potted provisions in the Halle, and took what they found. The authority from whom these facts are derived gave the following specimens of the prices which had been attained during the final days of the siege:—Two francs for a small shrivelled cabbage; 1 franc for a leek; 45 francs for a fowl; 45 francs for a rabbit (which was generally cat); 25 francs for a pigeon; 22 francs for a 2 lb. chub; 14 francs per pound for stickleback; 2 francs per pound for potatoes; 40 francs per pound for butter; cheese, 25 francs a pound, when procurable. Meat other than horse-flesh was absolutely not to be obtained. The absence of crime was remarkable. The streets became empty early in the evening, and, though unguarded by police, and faintly lit, were singularly free from outrages, and even from noise. Much distress was caused by the scarcity of fuel. The moral effect of the bombardment was said to have been very great, and the Government felt its pressure. M. Jules Simon told a friend of Mr. Forbes that the bombardment of St. Denis—a little town five miles north of Paris—had shortened the siege by a week. But these are points with respect to which the testimony of different witnesses varies considerably.

The same correspondent, speaking of the great city from a military point of view, remarked:—"Except her forts, her garrison, and her *enceinte*, it is curious to notice how much of an open town Paris has been all through the siege. The forepost defence line of the French is hardly worth talking of as an obstruction. Here and there, it is true, it is formidable. Around the Château of Villanteneuse, for instance, there is a series of works which are of a regular fortress character, and of a construction which is creditable to those who made them; but there they stand all alone, unsupported, as French soldiers, as well as French works, have been so often during this war. So the German patrols were wont quietly to walk round these Villanteneuse works, and do their business on the farther side, utterly negativing them. Non-continuity is the striking feature everywhere of the French line of defences." The St. Denis forts (with which the Villanteneuse works were connected) suffered very much from the bombardment, and the little town itself was greatly injured.

St. Denis is of interest on account of its fine old church, which the former French Kings chose as their place of burial. The patron saint of France, from whom the town is named, was put to death there about the year 250, together with Rusticus and Eleutheros. A tomb was afterwards erected over the remains of these three martyrs, and a chapel was then built on the spot. The first prince buried there was Dagobert, son of King Chilperic, who died in 580. The abbey of St. Denis was founded in 613, and a church of considerable magnificence was erected from time to time during the Middle Ages. The edifice now standing is substantially that which was commenced in the first half of the twelfth century, and finished in the second half of the fourteenth; and this rests on the foundations of one still more ancient, built by the Emperor Charlemagne, and consecrated, in the presence of that monarch and his court, in 775. The crypts of the older church yet remain; and it was here that, for a century and a half before the first French Revolution, the Kings of France were buried, while the tombs of some of the earlier sovereigns were to be found in other parts of the structure. These, however, were removed in the troublous times at the close of last century. By a decree of the National Convention, dated July 31st, 1793, it was ordered that they should be transferred to the Museum of French Monuments; but after the return of the Bourbons most of them were restored. When the decree of the Convention was being carried out, fifty-one Royal graves were desecrated, and the bones thrown into two large trenches outside the church. Under the Directory, the lead was stripped off the roof of the building, the

stained-glass windows were removed, and a decree was passed for pulling down the whole pile, and forming a market-place on its site. The latter intention, however, was fortunately never carried out; and the church of St. Denis yet stands, presenting one of the most interesting relics of former times to be found in modern Europe. A series of restorations was begun under the Consular and Imperial Governments of Napoleon Buonaparte, and completed during the reign of Louis Philippe; and the Royal remains were removed from the trenches by order of Louis XVIII., and deposited in the central vaults below the high altar. The abbey of St. Denis was suppressed in 1792, and the buildings are now occupied by an institution for the orphans of members of the Legion of Honour. The town is the seat of several manufactures, and possesses a considerable trade; but it has the unfortunate reputation of attracting all the worst workmen from other parts of France, so that, according to current reports, it changes half its population of 30,000 every year. A large number of the people are poor and intemperate; and they suffered a good deal during the siege operations. They were reduced to horseflesh about two months before the surrender of Paris, and to bread-rations ten days previous to that event. The bombardment, which was coeval with the shelling of Paris, took the townsfolk by surprise. The corporation ran away in fear, and, as the Admiral Commandant concerned himself simply with the forts, the civilians were left almost uncared for. The members of the International Ambulance, however, did great service. The *Daily News* correspondent, writing of their exertions, said :—

"They dragged the maimed and shattered out of the ruined houses; they collected the corpses from the streets and the ruins, and buried them with some semblance of decency. They went round the town, urging on the people that the women and children should go forth from the doomed town, and retire into Paris. The women and children were huddled in the semi-security of the cellars. The shells were crashing into the streets, and avalanches of stone and brick were ever crashing upon the side walks. The women, peeping forth, shudderingly declared that they would rather die where they were than incur a more certain and fearful death by sallying forth into that iron tempest. So they turned into the dark caverns to hunger and cold, and, cuddling their children to their bosoms, utterly refused to budge. The Pasteur Saglier went to the Commandant, and begged that he would allow him to go out as a *parlementaire* to the Germans, to ask for two hours' cessation of the bombardment, to give the women and children a chance to get away without being struck down as they went. The admiral refused, and the ruthless devilry went on. Then the Pasteur sent an appeal to the Paris journals, begging all who possessed means of conveyance to send them into St. Denis to remove the perishing women and children. The response was but weak, and there appeared not a solitary representative of those ambulances whose members took delight in flags, and gave themselves to the vanities of buttons and uniforms. About half a dozen private vehicles turned up, and with the help of these the sick and wounded were got out of the hospitals in the town, and located in two large factories on the plain between St. Denis and Paris. Then children followed, and women great with child, such as cared to go, till the plain houses became like caravanserais. Meanwhile, the few vehicles belonging to the ambulance were toiling assiduously in conveying to the rear the wounded struck down at the guns; a few men, and a few only, so far as I can learn, toiling with a zeal and energy that merited better support. As for the bold National Guards, their location was the wine-shop. Therein they imbibed the courage that prevented them from creeping into the cellars; and when their cups had made them reckless, they sallied out into the streets, only to give the ambulance more trouble with their worthless carcases. Not a few were killed as they staggered about; others were brought to the ambulance, wounded indeed, but as drunk as lords."

A terrible amount of ruin was wrought in the town by the bombardment, and, when the armistice was signed, the people were on the verge of starving. The abbey church was but little damaged. The modern Republicans, unlike their prototypes of 1793, had taken care of the tombs and statues of the Kings by enclosing them in wooden frames and sand-bags.

The "Besieged Resident" said that Paris was a grave. The people had collapsed morally and physically. They were utterly disgusted with themselves and every one else, and the reaction from the previous high-flown enthusiasm of defiance was overwhelming. Many people talked of blowing out their brains; and a captain in the navy was reported to have really done so. The city, however, continued tranquil; and the usual groups in the streets were after a little while no longer formed. Small bodies of soldiers wandered about, unarmed, idle, and listless. The cannon were removed from the ramparts; and a dreary feeling that all was over took possession of military and civilians alike. Everybody exclaimed with vehement bitterness against the Government of the National Defence. A friend of the "Besieged Resident" told him that Trochu, deserted by all, made speeches in the bosom of his family. The journals were unanimous in crying out, "No more speeches —no more lawyers!" And then they would go off into the wildest flights of declamation, and suggest some special pleader as the rising hope of the

country. Nothing was more remarkable than the desire to get out of Paris. More than 23,000 persons applied to the authorities for permission to leave the city, on the pretext that they were provincial candidates for the Assembly.

Notwithstanding the large amount of help sent from this country to the starving Parisians, England was very unpopular with the French at the time in question, because it was thought we ought to have done something to avert the triumph of Prussia. M. Jules Favre—who, in replying to Lord Granville's offer to aid the people of Paris with food from Government stores, had spoken of the proffered service as an instance of "that precious sentiment of union which ought to bind all nations together"—solemnly refused, in Paris itself, to be responsible for the life of any Englishman who might enter the city. This, however, was an unwitting exaggeration; for, although the feeling against England was undoubtedly very strong, it was not carried to any criminal lengths. Many Englishmen entered Paris as soon as it was possible to get in. The correspondents of our leading newspapers were very early on the spot, and their descriptions of the state of the great metropolis gave a vivid impression of the external features of a most memorable time. We have seen what the representative of the *Daily News* had to record. The experiences of the *Times* reporter seem to have been different, for he was struck by the wonted and ordinary appearance of things. He wrote:—

"There was nothing in the way of military preparation or fortification in the Champs Elysées. In fact, excepting that there were not a dozen carriages from one end of the drive to the other, and that there were far fewer well-dressed and fashionable-looking women than formerly, and a very much larger sprinkling of uniforms, this celebrated drive presented its usual aspect. As we drove on, we were surprised at the absence of change. What exactly I expected to see it would be difficult to define. I suppose every one has formed in his mind a picture of Paris as it is in contrast to Paris as it was; but the contrast is very slight in reality. The statue of Strasburg is still covered with *immortelles*, but there are none left on the railings round the column in the Place Vendôme. There are not so many shops open as usual on the Boulevards, and there is no flower-market at the Madeleine; but the *cafés* seem in full force, and the *charcuterie* shop-windows display a tolerable assortment of tins, but very little meat. I have not yet had time to do more than explore the Boulevards and the Rue de la Paix; and the one great impression which the aspect of those streets, and of Paris generally, has made upon my mind, has been that I have yet to discover the misery, and the starvation, and the sights which should make a town of two million inhabitants which has stood a four and a half months' siege, the most remarkable and interesting spectacle of modern times. This evening (February 2nd) I dined with a friend at the Café Peters, in the Passage des Princes. We had there Créçy soup, Seine smelts, excellent roast



VON MOLTKE AND THE EMPEROR.



MADAME MARIE SIMON, "THE FRIEND OF THE WOUNDED."

beef, salad, asparagus, preserved peaches, a bottle and a half of wine, and coffee, for thirteen francs each—a very much better and cheaper dinner than I had at the hotel at St. Germain two nights ago. The bread was brownish and a little sawdusty, but perfectly eatable; the beef was certainly not horse, though I believe it was on the bill of fare. Rats require to be ordered the day before, they are so little in demand. I counted three very well-fed-looking dogs roaming at large on the Boulevards, and not apparently exciting any unusual emotion in the breasts of the passers-by. The people do not look as if they had in any way suffered

privation, but are fat and cheerful as usual. After dinner we went to a concert in behalf of the wounded, which was crowded with a well-dressed and respectable audience, and was only remarkable for its intense dulness."

The first impressions of this correspondent must be received with some hesitation. There cannot be a doubt that the distress in Paris was severe. By the 2nd of February, however, a certain proportion of food had already been sent into the city.

The fall of Paris, the exhaustion of the country, the suffering and death of countless thousands, the waste and desolation, the impoverishment of the people, the loss of the old national supremacy, and the rise of Germany into the highest rank of European Powers, were evils enough, it might have been supposed, for one land to bear; but the danger of civil war was now superadded. M. Gambetta assumed every day a position of more decided hostility to the Government at Paris. He also took upon himself to disqualify for sitting in the National Assembly a large class of persons who were the objects of his political hatred. His proclamation of the 31st of January, denouncing the armistice, was followed by a decree convoking the electors for the 8th of February, and by another, commencing—"Whereas it is just that all the accomplices of the *régime* which commenced by the crime of the 2nd December, to terminate by the capitulation of Sedan, bequeathing to France ruin and invasion, should be momentarily struck by the same political downfall as the dynasty, which is for ever cursed, and of which they were the guilty instruments; whereas it is the necessary consequence of the responsibility which they have incurred in aiding and taking part, with the ex-Emperor's connivance, in the accomplishment of the various acts of his Government which have placed the country in danger"—and proceeding to enact that all who, from the 2nd December, 1851, until the 4th September, 1870, had accepted the functions of Minister, Senator, Councillor of State, and Prefect, could not any longer be representatives of the people in the National Assembly. The decree also declared ineligible for election to the National Assembly "all persons who, from the 2nd December, 1851, until the 4th September, 1870, accepted official candidatures, and whose names appeared in the list of candidates recommended by the Prefects to the suffrages of the electors, and who had been described in the official *Moniteur* either as candidates of the Government or Administration, or as official candidates." The members of the families which had reigned over France since 1789 were also declared ineligible; and there were some other disqualifications. The decrees were signed by all the members of the Delegate Government; but they were in direct opposition to a decree on the same subject previously issued by the Paris Ministers, and very serious consequences at first appeared likely to result from this conflict of authority. Ten of the principal Paris papers published, on the 2nd of February, a protest against the arbitrary ordinance of M. Gambetta, in introducing which they said:—

"Before publishing this protest, we thought it our duty to send three delegates to M. Jules Simon, to ask him if there did not exist a decree relative to the elections issued by the Government of Paris on the 28th January, and published in the *Journal Officiel*. M. Jules Simon replied that such was the case, and that that decree had been unanimously adopted on the 28th January by the members of the Government of Paris. It suppressed all incompatibilities, with the exception of Prefects, who cannot be elected in the departments they administer. The elections for Paris were fixed for the 5th February. The *Journal Officiel* which contained the said decree had been sent to all the departments, by order of the Government of Paris. M. Jules Simon received a safe-conduct on the 31st of January, and left Paris the same morning.* As soon as he arrived in Bordeaux, he called a meeting of the members of the Delegate Government, in order to explain the state of things. The deliberations of the council were protracted. This afternoon, at four o'clock, the council met again. M. Jules Simon declared to the delegates of the press that he intended to persist in the execution of the decree of the Government of Paris. In presence of these declarations, which M. Jules Simon has authorised us to publish, the undersigned representatives of the press have only to await the execution of the decree of Paris."

It was not only the Paris journalists who protested against the action proposed to be taken by the Delegate Government of Bordeaux. A much more important person set himself in opposition to the decree; and it is probable that, even had the Parisian Ministers been inclined to support the policy of their Bordeaux colleagues, they would have felt themselves compelled to give way. Count Bismarck immediately and emphatically declared that Germany would not recognise an Assembly elected after such a fashion. A telegram from the Imperial head-quarters at Versailles, dated the evening of February 3rd, and published in the English papers, said, after alluding to the objectionable decree:—"The fears that the elections would not be free, which Count Bismarck expressed

* There appears to be some confusion or error in this account. M. Simon could not have been aware of the disabilities decree before he started.

while discussing the Convention of the 28th January, and in consequence of which he proposed a convocation of the Corps Législatif—a proposal not assented to by M. Jules Favre—have thus been corroborated. Count Bismarck has, in a note, protested against the decree; and only freely elected deputies, as stipulated in the Convention, will be recognised by the Germans as representatives of France." The telegraphic note to M. Gambetta, which was despatched the same evening, ran thus: —"On behalf of the freedom of the elections stipulated by the armistice, I protest against your regulations for depriving numerous categories of French citizens of the right of being elected to the Assembly. Elections carried out under a system of arbitrary oppression cannot confer the rights which the Armistice Convention recognises as possessed by freely-elected deputies.—BISMARCK." In publishing this note at Bordeaux, M. Gambetta remarked: —"We said that Prussia, to satisfy her ambition, calculated upon an Assembly into which acccomplices and flatterers of the fallen dynasty, and allies of Count Bismarck, might enter, thanks to the brief interval preceding its election, and the material difficulties of all kinds which stand in the way. The decree of exclusion issued on the 31st ult. has foiled these hopes. The insolent pretensions of the Prussian Minister to interfere with the constitution of a French Assembly afford a most striking justification of the measures taken by the Government of the Republic. The lesson will not be lost upon those who have retained any feeling of national honour." Another document issued by the Delegate Government was to the effect that M. Jules Simon had brought to Bordeaux an electoral decree at variance with that published by M. Gambetta and his colleagues; that the Government of Paris, having been invested during the previous four months, could not have any knowledge of the feeling of the provinces; that, moreover, it was a prisoner of war; and, besides, there was no reason to show that, had it been better informed, it would not have agreed with the Government of Bordeaux, or that, in the mission entrusted in general terms to M. Jules Simon to proceed with the elections, the Paris Government intended to settle absolutely and definitively the particular case of electoral disabilities. "Under these circumstances," continued the document, "the Government of Bordeaux thinks it a duty to maintain its decree. It maintains that decree despite the remonstrances and interference of Count Bismarck in the internal affairs of France; it maintains it on behalf of the honour and interests of France. A member of the Government of Bordeaux will leave to-day (February 5th) to acquaint the Government of Paris with the real state of things." The authority of M. Jules Simon was thus entirely overborne, and a most painful division of the country, in its hour of mortal agony, seemed inevitable.

So strong was the feeling of Bordeaux in favour of the Delegate Government, and against that of Paris, that M. Simon could not find a bill-sticker to post up his electoral decree. On the night of the 3rd of February, a crowded public meeting was held in the theatre, at which it was resolved to make a great popular demonstration, and to present to M. Gambetta an address, asking him whether he would accept the presidency of a Committee of Public Safety, and perform his promise to prosecute the war to the uttermost. All the speakers declared the capitulation of Paris not binding on the provinces; strongly condemned M. Jules Favre and the Convention of Versailles; pronounced against the elections, and maintained that the salvation of the country was only possible by the immediate constitution of an energetic Committee of Public Safety, crushing all attempts at reaction, and giving a vigorous impulse to the war. Other demonstrations of a similar nature took place on later days. The truth is, that the South of France, not having tasted the bitterness of invasion, was eager to continue the struggle; while the North, exhausted by a long and savage contest, bled almost to death, desolated and ruined, both in its cities and its fields, was rapidly coming to the determination that it would no longer be sacrificed to a spurious democracy and a fanatical patriotism. In Paris and the northern parts of France, the arbitrary decree of M. Gambetta was very generally condemned. It was seen to be a monstrous attempt to stifle the legitimate opinion of the country, and to impose a foregone conclusion on the national councils. The extreme Republicans feared that the Imperialists were still strong in many quarters, and that they would favour a policy of peace. The war had indeed never been a distinctly Imperial question. It had been rather forced on the Empire by the constant taunts of subserviency to Prussia which the Opposition—Republican and otherwise—had for some years employed as one of their most potent instruments of attack. In spite of the despicable meanness with which, when the war proved a failure, the Republicans turned round on the Emperor, and fastened on him the sole guilt of what they had been long reviling him for not doing, it was well known that they had always been bitterly opposed to the growth and consolidation of German power. There was consequently a probability that Imperial candidates at the elections would endea-

vour to turn the tables on the Republicans, fix the odium of the war on them, and teach the country to look to the Buonapartists for a future of peace and reparation. This was the real basis of M. Gambetta's decree. Ultra-Republicans in France are always in favour of disabilities on a large scale. The actual opinion of the country is the very thing they do not desire to get at, because they know it is only too likely to be against them; and so they endeavour, by tyrannical disqualifications, to create a fraudulent judgment in their own favour. To say that the officials of the Empire were ineligible because of the origin of the Imperial power, was preposterous in a country where, for eighty years, every successive government had been the creature of conspiracy or of violence.

In its fury of rage and grief, the South now openly accused Paris and its governors of treachery and cowardice. Paris retorted by asking why the South never sent an army to relieve it. The feeling of the great majority of Parisians at this time was truthfully expressed by the *Times* correspondent when he wrote:—"That, at a moment when people have made up their minds to live for their country, M. Gambetta should, on his own responsibility, have issued a proclamation which seemed to threaten a suspension of the revictualling of Paris by the indignant Prussians, has excited a fever of rage and consternation amid the famished population. It is easy for the Government at Bordeaux, with plenty of white bread, to talk of war to the uttermost; but the only war to which the Parisians could now be excited would be directed against those who should continue to force privation upon them. Hence every fresh evidence which reaches us from Bordeaux, and which is couched in a warlike spirit, is only suggestive to the morbid imaginations of the Parisians of more rats and sawdust-bread, and they positively decline to continue feeding off those articles any longer. All through the occupied provinces, terror of fresh horrors and sufferings will produce a political activity and a moral courage on the part of peasants and *bourgeoisie* unknown in previous elections." During the last few days of the siege there had, no doubt, been a strong feeling among the Parisians in favour of the most vigorous measures against the enemy; and the first news of the armistice excited a sentiment of mortification and anger. But this outbreak of very natural passion soon died away in all but a few quarters. It was seen that the resources of the capital and of the country were at an end; and the more reasonable were not long in coming to the conclusion that it was only by making terms with the victorious enemy that utter ruin could be averted. The Red Republicans of Belleville and other revolutionary parts of the city were of course opposed to this view; but it had the support of the majority, however coldly they might look on Trochu, Favre, and the rest, for having failed to deliver Paris while it was yet possible, if at any time it was possible at all.

Together with his protest addressed to M. Gambetta, Count Bismarck sent a longer note of similar purport to M. Jules Favre. The French Minister, speaking in the name of the whole Paris Government, replied:—"In the negotiations respecting the Convention, there was no question of any restrictions of the right of voting. The country wishes free elections. If the Delegation in Bordeaux has really issued a decree limiting electoral rights, of which the Paris Government has not yet any knowledge, the Government of the National Defence will certainly rescind it. Probably it will only be possible to put a stop to this confusion by an adjournment of the elections." This adjournment was afterwards ordered by a decree dated February 2nd, which altered the day of the elections from Sunday the 5th to Wednesday the 8th of February. On the 4th of the month, the Paris Government formally annulled the Bordeaux decree, and defended its policy with regard to the non-imposition of disabilities in the following important State document, signed by the whole body:—

"Frenchmen!—Paris has laid down its arms when on the verge of starvation. It had been told to 'hold out for a few weeks, and we will deliver you.' It resisted for five months, and, despite heroic efforts, the departments have not been able to succour it. Paris resigned itself to the most cruel privations; it accepted ruin, disease, and exhaustion. During a whole month, shells have poured into the city, slaying women and children. For upwards of six weeks, the few grammes of bad bread distributed to each inhabitant have scarcely sufficed to maintain life; and when, thus vanquished by the most inexorable necessity, the great city comes to a standstill, in order not to condemn 2,000,000 inhabitants to the most horrible catastrophe—when, profiting by its remnant of strength, it treats with the enemy, instead of submitting to an unconditional surrender—the Government of the National Defence is accused elsewhere of culpable levity, is denounced and repudiated. Let France judge us, and all those who but yesterday were prodigal in their protestations of friendship and respect, but who to-day insult us. We would not take notice of their atttacks if duty did not command us to hold with a firm hand, even to the last moment, the helm which the people of Paris intrusted to us in the hour of tempest. We will fulfil that duty. When, at the end of January, we resigned ourselves to an effort to make terms, it was very late. We had flour for only ten days, and we

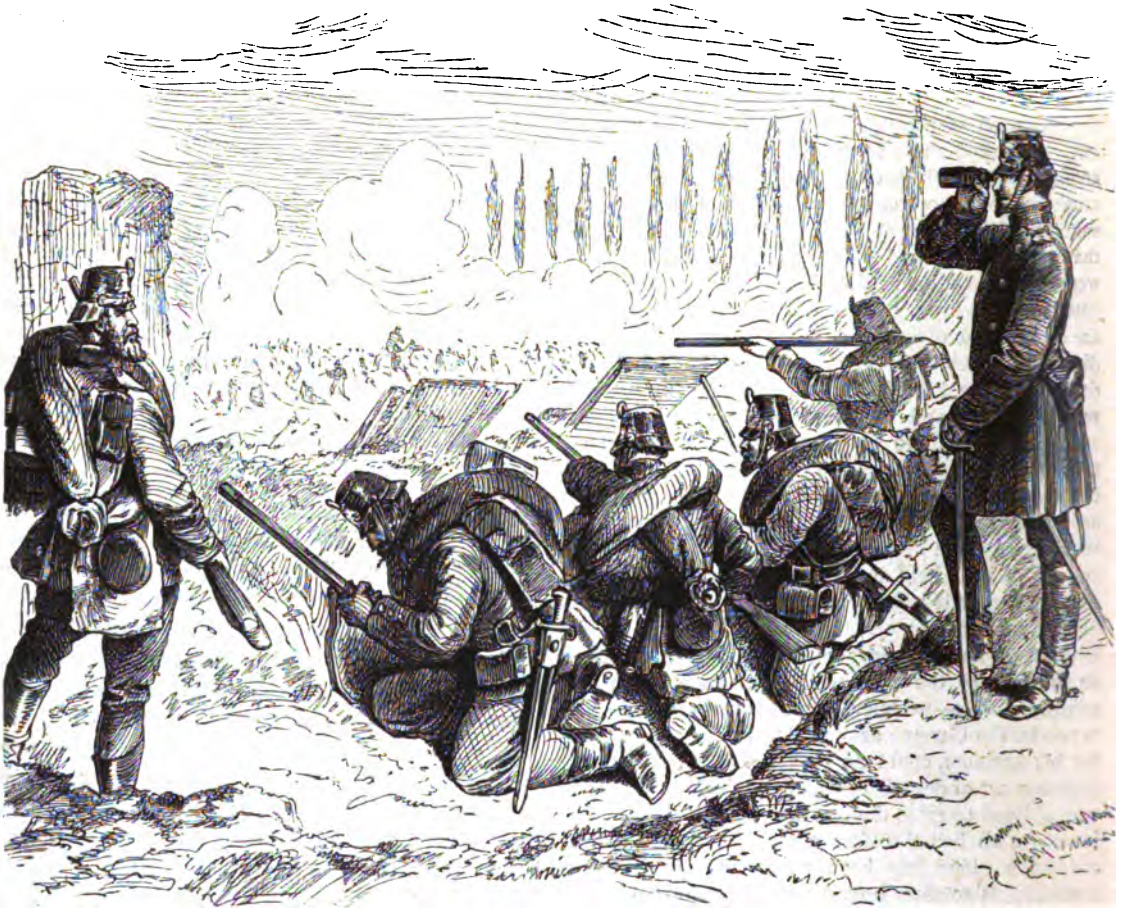
knew that the devastation of the country rendered revictualling very uncertain. Those who now declaim against us will never know the anguish we have endured. It was, however, necessary to conceal our anxieties, and to approach the enemy with resolution—with an appearance of readiness still to fight, and of possessing ample provisions. What we desired was this—above all things to usurp no rights. To France alone it belonged to dispose of herself. We desired to reserve that right to her. It cost protracted efforts to obtain the recognition of her sovereignty. This forms the most important feature of our treaty. We have preserved to the National Guard its liberty and its arms. If, notwithstanding our efforts, we have been unable to exempt the army and the Garde Mobile from the operation of the rigorous laws of war, at least we have preserved them from captivity in Germany, and confinement in an entrenched camp under Prussian muskets. We are reproached with not having consulted the Delegation at Bordeaux; but it is overlooked that we were enclosed within an iron circle, which we were unable to break through. It is moreover forgotten that every passing day rendered more terrible the catastrophe of famine; and yet we maintained the discussion, contesting the ground inch by inch for six days, while the inhabitants of Paris, ignorant of their real situation, and influenced only by a generous ardour, demanded to be led out to fight. We have, then, yielded to an inevitable necessity. We have, by the convocation of the Assembly, stipulated for an armistice at a time when the armies which might have succoured us had been driven back far from us. Only one army still held out—at least, so we believed. Prussia demanded the surrender of Belfort. We refused; and on that account, in order to protect the fortress, we for some days reserved freedom of action on the part of the army which was endeavouring to relieve it. But—we knew it not—it was too late. Cut in two by the German armies, Bourbaki, notwithstanding his heroism, could no longer resist, and, after the generous act of despair to which he yielded, his troops were obliged to cross the frontier. The Convention of January 28th has therefore compromised no interest, and Paris alone has been sacrificed. It does not murmur. It renders homage to the valour of those who have fought afar off with a view to its relief. It does not even accuse him who to-day is so unjust and so rash—the Minister of War, who, on January 13th, thwarted General Chanzy's desire to march upon Paris, and ordered him to retire behind the Mayence. No. All was useless, and we must yield. But our honour is maintained, and we will not permit that to be tarnished. We have summoned France to elect freely an Assembly which at this supreme crisis will make known its will. We recognise in no one a right to impose a decision upon it, either for Peace or for War. A nation attacked by a powerful enemy fights to the last extremity; but it is always the judge of the moment when resistance ceases to be possible. That is what we shall be told by the country when it is consulted upon its own fate. In order that its will may be imposed upon all as a law to be respected, there must be the sovereign expression of the free suffrage of all. Now, we do not admit that arbitrary restrictions can be imposed upon that suffrage. We have fought against the Empire and its practices, and we do not intend to revive them by instituting a system of official candidates by means of elimination. Great mistakes may have been committed, and heavy responsibilities may flow therefrom; nothing can be more true, but the misfortunes of the country efface everything by its extreme need; and moreover, by lowering ourselves to the condition of mere party actors, to proscribe our former antagonists, we should have the shame and sorrow of wounding those who have fought and bled by our side. To recall the memories of past dissensions at a time when the enemy treads our blood-stained soil, is to retard by rancour the great task of the deliverance of the country. We regard principles as superior to expedients. We do not wish that the first decree of convocation of the Republican Assembly in 1871 should be an act of mistrust directed against the electors. To them belongs the sovereignty; let them exercise it without weakness, and the country may be saved. The Government of the National Defence regrets, then, and annuls, if it should be necessary, the decree illegally issued by the Delegation at Bordeaux; and it calls upon all Frenchmen to vote without ostracism for the representatives who may appear to them to be the worthiest of France. Long live the Republic! Long live France!"

It cannot be denied that the Paris Government here took its stand on a just, reasonable, and intelligible principle. The question of peace or war was honestly referred to the whole nation for its supreme decision, and no attempt was made to prejudge the issue. The Germans could not be expected to accept any other decision; for to have assented to M. Gambetta's restrictions would have been to run the risk of a continuance of the war, based on an imperfect declaration of the national wishes, so manipulated as to give apparent sanction to a particular view. Of course it was very humiliating to find a Prussian Minister interfering, as M. Gambetta phrased it, with the constitution of a French Assembly; but M. Gambetta had brought the humiliation on himself and on his country, and it was not for *him* to complain. The conqueror has rights as well as the conquered. Germany was almost as much interested in the question to be decided by the National Assembly as France herself; and it was out of all reason to demand that she should put up with a doubtful verdict.

M. Jules Simon found little support in the Delegate capital; and the *Gironde* newspaper was actually seized for publishing his decree with respect to the elections. The same journal contained, in its number for February 5th, a letter from M. Simon, setting forth the origin and circumstances of the conflict between himself and his colleagues of

Bordeaux. He said he was absolutely forbidden by his instructions to consent to any disqualifications founded on political grounds. On that point he would not yield. Popular sovereignty, he remarked, being the vital principle of the Republic, it was tantamount to a renunciation of that principle to mutilate the suffrage, or to stint it in its expression, and in the exercise of its right. While condemning the Imperial system of official candidates as shameful, and while imploring the people not to choose persons who had accepted that unworthy position, M. Simon declined to decide for the electors, and declared that, as member of a Provisional Government, he had only the duty of supplying every facility for the popular vote, and of maintaining order during the elections. The convocation of the National Assembly, he added, afforded serious hopes of an honourable peace. He denied that Prussia had yet made her demands known, and concluded by adjuring his countrymen to be united, to have but one heart and one will, and to think only of saving their native land. If acceptable terms were not conceded, the country would renew the war; but he anticipated an honourable peace, to be attained through the Assembly which it had become so urgent to elect.

M. Gambetta was not satisfied with his disabilities decree alone. He and his colleagues issued about the same time another decree, dismissing from their seats, and expelling from the corporation of magistrates, certain judges who had been prominent supporters of the Empire. The preamble of the decree was in these words:—"Considering that, in 1852, after the crime of December 2nd, when a usurping power violated all laws, broke up the Assembly of Representatives of the People, and crushed the Republican Constitution, certain judges, who should have been the guardians of the law, associated themselves with the odious persecutions of the tyrant, and aided him to proscribe the enemies of his usurpation and the friends of the Republic; considering that these men, they being



PRUSSIAN SKIRMISHERS.

magistrates and the representatives of justice, consented to act on political commissions, and pronounced sentences unknown to the law against citizens whom they did not so much as call upon for their defence; and considering that they transported to Cayenne numbers of citizens who were altogether free from reproach; we decree," &c. The self-ignorance of men is a marvellous phenomenon. It is strange that neither M. Gambetta nor any of his fellow Ministers should have reflected that the power acquired by Louis Napoleon in virtue of the *coup d'état* could not, even at the moment, have been more illegal than that which they were then wielding themselves; while it afterwards obtained the sanction of repeated ratifications by the French people, which theirs had never done. What conceivable right could be possessed by a body of self-chosen rulers, who had never consulted the people as to their wishes, to dismiss a number of judges appointed by a regularly-constituted authority? The decree was signed, amongst others, by M. Crémieux, Minister of Justice, who, in the previous November, had issued a circular condemning the illegal arrest, in some parts of the country, of judges who had served on Louis Napoleon's mixed commission in 1851—2, by which several persons had been transported to Cayenne. He then ordered the immediate release of these judges, who had been absolved in 1862 by the statute of limitations applicable to criminal prosecutions; but at the same time he promised to take into consideration any measures necessary to purge the judicial bench of judges who were a disgrace to it.* The decree to which attention has been called was the fulfilment of this promise; but it seems likely that the inspiring genius was M. Gambetta. The Bordeaux colleagues of that Minister did little else than sanction his ordinances and flatter his authority.



IN THE THICK OF THE FIGHT.

* See Vol. I., pp. 432-3.

Very general dissatisfaction with the armistice was expressed in the southern cities. The Municipal Council of Lyons issued an address, which ran :—"Inasmuch as peace would be for the Republic an act of suicide, and a disgrace, so long as the enemy tramples upon the soil of our country, and as war to the uttermost is the only means of safety, the Commune of Lyons is determined to take every measure required by the common danger, and urges the Government to prosecute the national defence with renewed zeal and energy. The Commune would cease to support the Government the day that it consented to the dismemberment of France. Convinced that the march of events renders Lyons the true centre of resistance, the Commune urges the Delegation to establish itself in Lyons, in order to watch more efficiently over the supreme effort which is to save the country." The *Progrès de Lyons* published the programme of a new Ultra-Republican Society formed in Paris under the auspices of Messrs. Ledru Rollin, Delescluze, and Peyronton. The scheme of these politicians—which at that time was more likely to find favour at Lyons than in the capital—advocated the establishment of an indivisible Republic, the constitution of a sole Assembly empowered to elect a revocable Executive Power, the suppression of the permanent army, the creation of a national militia comprising all citizens, a reduction in the budget, the suppression of all aristocratic titles, and the annulment of privileges. It also repudiated wars of conquest, and urged that no negotiations could be entered into with the enemy as long as he should remain in the country. At Marseilles also great indignation was expressed at the action of the Paris Government; and at Toulouse a meeting, attended by 3,000 persons, was convened by the Democratic party, at which resolutions were passed declaring that, in the opinion of the party of action, the Government of the National Defence had forfeited its power. M. Gambetta was therefore requested to undertake the task of constituting a Committee of Public Safety, with a view to rejecting the armistice, continuing the war, and establishing a Republican Government. Two delegates were ordered to leave immediately for Bordeaux, in order to present these resolutions to the War Minister.

The prospects of a collision between the two Governments grew worse every day; but the danger was ultimately averted by the resignation of M. Gambetta. Messieurs Arago, Garnier Pagés, and Eugène Pelletan, members of the Paris Government, arrived at Bordeaux on February 6th, bringing with them the decree annulling that of M. Gambetta, which had created so much trouble. The dictator thereupon relinquished his powers, and the Director-General of Telegraphs transmitted to all the Prefects an order setting aside the disabilities which M. Gambetta had imposed. The Bordeaux authorities forbade a meeting which was to have been held, and the approaches to the theatre and the Prefecture were occupied by pickets of the National Guard.

In announcing his resignation to the Prefects and Sub-Prefects, M. Gambetta observed that, notwithstanding the grave objections and the legitimate resistance which were provoked by the execution of the Convention of Versailles, he had determined on giving, as he had said he would, an incontestable proof of moderation and good faith, by not quitting his post until he had made arrangements for holding the elections. He remained convinced that from those elections might spring, despite material difficulties of all kinds, a proud and resolute Assembly. Alluding to the memorable decree, he said that in his opinion it satisfied both the demands of justice, in respect of the responsible co-operators with the Imperial system, and a sense of prudence with regard to foreign intrigues. This decree had extracted "a calumnious protest" from Count Bismarck; in consequence of which the Paris Government had cancelled the Bordeaux ordinance, and had sent three of their number to the south, to enforce that determination. The Prefects of the various departments had also been directed to observe the orders from Paris. Such acts (remarked M. Gambetta) constituted both a disavowal and a dismissal of the Minister of War and of the Interior. A divergence of opinion upon matters of essential importance, both as regards domestic and foreign policy, had thus been manifested in a way not to be mistaken; and M. Gambetta felt that his conscience required him to resign his functions as member of a Government with which neither his ideas nor his hopes were then in harmony. Finally, he begged the Prefects and Sub-Prefects to facilitate the elections of the 8th of February, and to reserve for a future period such other determinations as they might think necessary.

Had M. Gambetta been animated from the first by the moderate and reasonable feeling exhibited in this farewell address, he might doubtless have remained in office some time longer, and have given the cause he had at heart the benefit of his energy and his organising genius. If the elections, unmodified by the disabilities decree which he would fain have passed, were capable of returning "a proud and resolute Assembly," what possible excuse could there have been for denying to a large

class of men the right to submit themselves to the popular suffrage? If it was proper on the 6th of February to exhort the Prefects to reserve for ulterior consideration all questions but the immediate question of the hour, how could it have been justifiable on the 31st of January for one man to decide on his own motion a very important point in constitutional government and political morals? M. Gambetta could see this when he was no longer free to work his mischievous pleasure; but it was not soon forgotten that he sought to limit the sphere of the national sovereignty, and to substitute his own jealousy and party spite for the authentic expression of the popular will.

On the same day that M. Gambetta notified his resignation, the Prefect of the Gironde (the department in which Bordeaux is situated) issued a proclamation in which he begged the electors not to allow the good reputation of their public meetings and the character of their demonstrations to be compromised by men unknown to Bordeaux—unknown, also, to the democracy, and therefore to be suspected. (This was supposed to be an allusion to some of the Garibaldians.) It was true that an armistice imposed on the nation by the enemy, and elections ordered at such a moment, were of a nature to afflict and disquiet them; but wisdom might turn to the profit of the Republic and of the National Defence circumstances which now could not be prevented. "Distrust those," said the Prefect, "who speak of its being impossible to ensure the public safety, with a view to inducing you to abstain from voting—a course which would enable our adversaries to secure a majority in the Assembly. Distrust those who would lead you to waste the time and energy of the Government, and those who seek to divide the Democratic party and envenom the conflict. Prepare, therefore, not to waste your strength in tumultuous demonstrations and vain cries, but to vote for men who will be capable of directing without weakness the destinies of the Republic. Save your unfortunate but beloved country from a peril into which it is being led by the official candidates of Count Bismarck." The concluding phrase of this document was an absurdity. There were no "official candidates of Count Bismarck;" but there were many candidates who, exercising their rights as Frenchmen in judging of the requirements of France, thought that what the country needed above all things was peace and reconstruction. The advice not to abstain from voting, however, was wise. Abstention is one of the main curses of French political life. It is the petulance which refuses to have any share in a public benefit, because it cannot have all.

At one time the division between the two Governments looked so serious that Austria, Italy, and Spain tendered their good offices with a view to bringing about an understanding, and at the same time strongly counselled the Bordeaux Delegation to act in harmony with the Government of Paris; but fortunately the difficulty passed over without the necessity of any interposition. M. Crémieux, who was deputed by the Delegate Government to proceed to Paris to represent the views of M. Gambetta before M. Jules Favre and his colleagues, met Messieurs Garnier-Pagés, Pelletan, and Emmanuel Arago at Vierzon, on their road from Paris. He accordingly did not continue his journey, but returned with them to Bordeaux, it being evident that the question had been absolutely settled. Although, however, the decree of the 31st of January had been annulled, certain disabilities were still enforced. On the 7th of February, M. Emmanuel Arago sent to the Prefects a circular reminding them that persons belonging to families which had reigned over France were ineligible by virtue of the laws of April, 10th, 1832, and June 9th, 1848; and stating that a decree had that day been issued, extending those provisions to the Buonaparte family. The Prefect of the Gironde, in publishing this circular, observed that, of all the disqualifications laid down by the decree of January 31st, the above-mentioned would alone be maintained. It is obvious, however, that the restrictions on the candidature of any member of the Buonaparte family were as essentially unjust and illegal as the disabilities sought to be imposed by M. Gambetta. The laws of April, 1832, and of June, 1848, were passed by regularly constituted, representative Governments, and, even if injudicious, were perfectly legitimate. The decree of February 7th, 1871, had no such warrant. It was the mere arbitrary determination of certain men, holding no commission from the country, to prevent the nation making choice of certain other men if it pleased. If no French constituency was likely to choose a Buonaparte, the decree was useless, if any constituency *might* have been so inclined, what right had M. Favre and his colleagues to say that they should not determine whom they would have for their representative? The arrest and subsequent deportation of Prince Joinville, while the war was still going on, when there was no power of consulting the country, and when the Government was in a provisional state, may have been justifiable; but when the time had arrived for submitting all matters to the nation, it was a most unwarrantable act of power to attempt to prejudge any question, and to shackle the national choice.

By the Red Republicans of Paris, however, all such arbitrary acts were highly applauded. Some new "ultra" journals were started there to meet the crisis. M. Rochefort began one called the *Mot d'Ordre* (which he would fain have designated the *Régicide*), and M. Félix Pyat appeared with the *Vengeur*, successor to the *Combat*, which had already made itself very conspicuous during the war. The objects of the *Vengeur* were sufficiently defined in the sentences—"The Empire is invasion, and the Republic deliverance. The Empire is capitulation, and the Republic resistance. The Republic will survive to save France and avenge Paris. *Vengeance!*"

CHAPTER XIX.

Silence of the Emperor Napoleon during the War—Reasons for this—The Provisional Government left to work out its own Ruin—Proclamation of the Emperor to the French People—Address of the Duke d'Aumale—Election of the Duke d'Aumale and Prince Joinville—Candidature of M. Louis Blanc—Unpopularity of the Elections—Absence of Excitement in Paris—Red Republican Extravagances—Opinions of M. Félix Pyat—A Savage Protest—Foreshadowings of Civil War—A Hungry Crowd at the Bridge of Neuilly—Letter from Garibaldi—The *Neue Freie Presse*, of Vienna, on the War Indemnity—German Resolve to obtain Protection for the Future—General Results of the Elections—Meeting of the National Assembly at Bordeaux—Appearance of the House—Resignation of the Government of the National Defence—Retirement of Garibaldi—Tumultuous Scenes—Constitution of the Chamber—M. Thiers made Head of the Executive Power—His Adhesion to the Republic—Protest against the Annexation of Alsace and Lorraine.

DURING the progress of the war, from the period of Sedan to the time of the armistice and the elections, the Emperor Napoleon maintained a strict silence. He doubtless felt that, as a prisoner, he occupied a position towards the country which rendered it more fitting that he should withhold from any comments on its situation and prospects than that by premature utterance he should appear desirous of sacrificing the cause of France to his own convenience. He must, moreover, have reflected that, however much popular opinion may have forced him to adopt a war policy, the commencement of the struggle and its earlier disasters were associated with his name and rule. By one of his latest acts before leaving Paris, he had handed over the Government to the Empress; and in negotiating with Count Bismarck at Sedan, as well as in subsequent discussions, he had always refused to treat on behalf of France, or to compromise the national resistance in any way whatever. This was assuredly the only dignified position to assume. His character as a representative man vanished in the smoke of the battle-field which crushed his army. He had no longer a legal or a popular ground from which he could address the nation. The legal ground had been given up to the Empress; the popular ground was lost for a while in a tide of misfortune and disgrace. Any attempt on the part of the Emperor to issue a manifesto during the autumn and early winter would undoubtedly have provoked (whether justly or unjustly) a very loud and general cry of anger and disdain. The Emperor must have felt this, and he refrained from calling forth recriminations which would certainly have been damaging, even had they been untrue. It is quite conceivable also that he was very willing to let the Republic take its own course, commit its own blunders, accumulate its own disasters, and wear out the momentary enthusiasm of the public by the inevitable process of disenchantment and decay. Governments that are the creatures of revolutionary excitement are invariably the victims of reactionary disgust. The realities of failure, or of imperfect performance, form too bitter a contrast to the splendid idealisms with which the new political forms were inaugurated, to leave anything but a sense of weariness, disappointment, and languor. Napoleon III., whose knowledge of men and of revolutions was far beyond that of the ordinary standard of sovereigns, must have considered this, among other things, in his meditations at Wilhelmshöhe; and it is therefore likely enough that he calculated on the cause of the Empire being served by the errors of the Republic. To some extent he was right in his anticipations, if such indeed was the direction of his thoughts. The impulse which carried the Republic into power in September had exhausted itself by January. Trochu, Favre, Gambetta, and their colleagues, were discredited. The new Government had failed even more tragically than the old; and there were some at least who began to think that perhaps the change had been a mistake.

It was in consequence of this altered state of

things that the Emperor determined to break the silence which he had observed for five months. The war being practically at an end, and an appeal to the country being at last about to be made, the reasons which had hitherto deterred Napoleon from speaking were thought to be no longer in existence. When representatives of all the other parties into which France is divided were in the field—when Legitimists, Orleanists, and the several sections of the Republican body, were laying their diverse claims before the nation—it would have been strange if the head of the house of Buonaparte, which had for so many years been closely associated with the national life, had forborne from making any sign, or uttering any voice. The Emperor accordingly issued from the place of his captivity the following proclamation to the French people, dated February 8th, the day of the elections :—

"Betrayed by fortune, I have preserved since my captivity that profound silence which is misfortune's mourning. So long as the armies of France and Germany confronted one another, I abstained from all steps or words which might have divided the public mind. I can no longer be silent in face of the disasters of my country, without appearing to be insensible to its sufferings. When I was compelled to constitute myself a prisoner, I could not treat for peace ; my decisions would have seemed dictated by personal considerations. I left to the Government of the Regent the duty of deciding whether the interests of the nation required a continuation of the struggle. Notwithstanding unheard-of reverses, France was not subdued. Our strongholds still held out ; few departments were invaded ; Paris was in a state of defence ; and the extent of our misfortunes might have been limited.

"But, while attention was fixed upon the enemy, an insurrection broke out in Paris. The seat of the national representatives was violated ; the safety of the Empress was threatened ; a Government installed itself by surprise in the Hôtel de Ville ; and the Empire, which the whole nation had just acclaimed for the third time, was overthrown, abandoned by those who should have been its defenders. Setting aside my presentiments for a time, I exclaimed, 'What matter the dynasty, if the country can be saved?' and, instead of protesting against the violence done against right, I desired the success of the National Defence, and I have admired the patriotic devotion shown by the children of all classes and of all parties.

"Now that the struggle is suspended, that the capital, notwithstanding an heroic resistance, has succumbed, and that all reasonable chance of victory has disappeared, it is time to ask for an account, from those who have usurped power, of the blood shed without necessity, the ruin heaped up without reason, the resources of the country squandered without control.

"The destinies of France cannot be abandoned to a Government without mandate, which, while disorganising the Administration, has not left standing a single authority emanating from universal suffrage. The nation cannot long obey those who have no right to command. Order, confidence, and a solid peace will not be restored till the people have been consulted as to the most capable Government for repairing the national disasters.

"In the solemn circumstances in which we are situated, in the face of an invasion, and with Europe attentive, it is important that France should be one in her aims and her desires, as well as in her decisions. Such is the object towards which the efforts of all good citizens should tend.

"As regards myself, bruised by so much injustice and such bitter deceptions, I do not come forward to-day to claim rights which four times in twenty years you freely confirmed. In the presence of the calamities which afflict us, there is no room for personal ambition. But, so long as the people, regularly assembled in its *comitia*, shall not have manifested its will, it will be my duty to address myself to the nation as its real representative, and to tell it that all that may be done without its direct participation is illegitimate. There is but one Government which has issued from the national sovereignty, and which, rising above the egotism of parties, has the strength to heal your wounds, to reopen your hearts to hope and your profaned churches to your prayers, and to bring back industry, concord, and peace to the bosom of the country. "NAPOLEON."

This proclamation of course met with a great deal of criticism among certain circles of French politicians ; but it is impossible to deny, or at any rate to disprove, some of its statements. That the existing Government was without mandate—that the Administration had recklessly abolished authorities emanating from universal suffrage—that the present possessors of power were usurpers, and that their sudden success in September was the result of treachery—all these things were too true to be upset by any amount of Republican declamation or demagogic virulence. Whether the Emperor was any the more, on this account, the right man to be again placed at the head of affairs, was not so obvious. But the question was one for the nation to decide in the exercise of that sovereignty which Republicans are so fond of asserting, and so prone to baffle and evade when they have reason to fear its decisions.

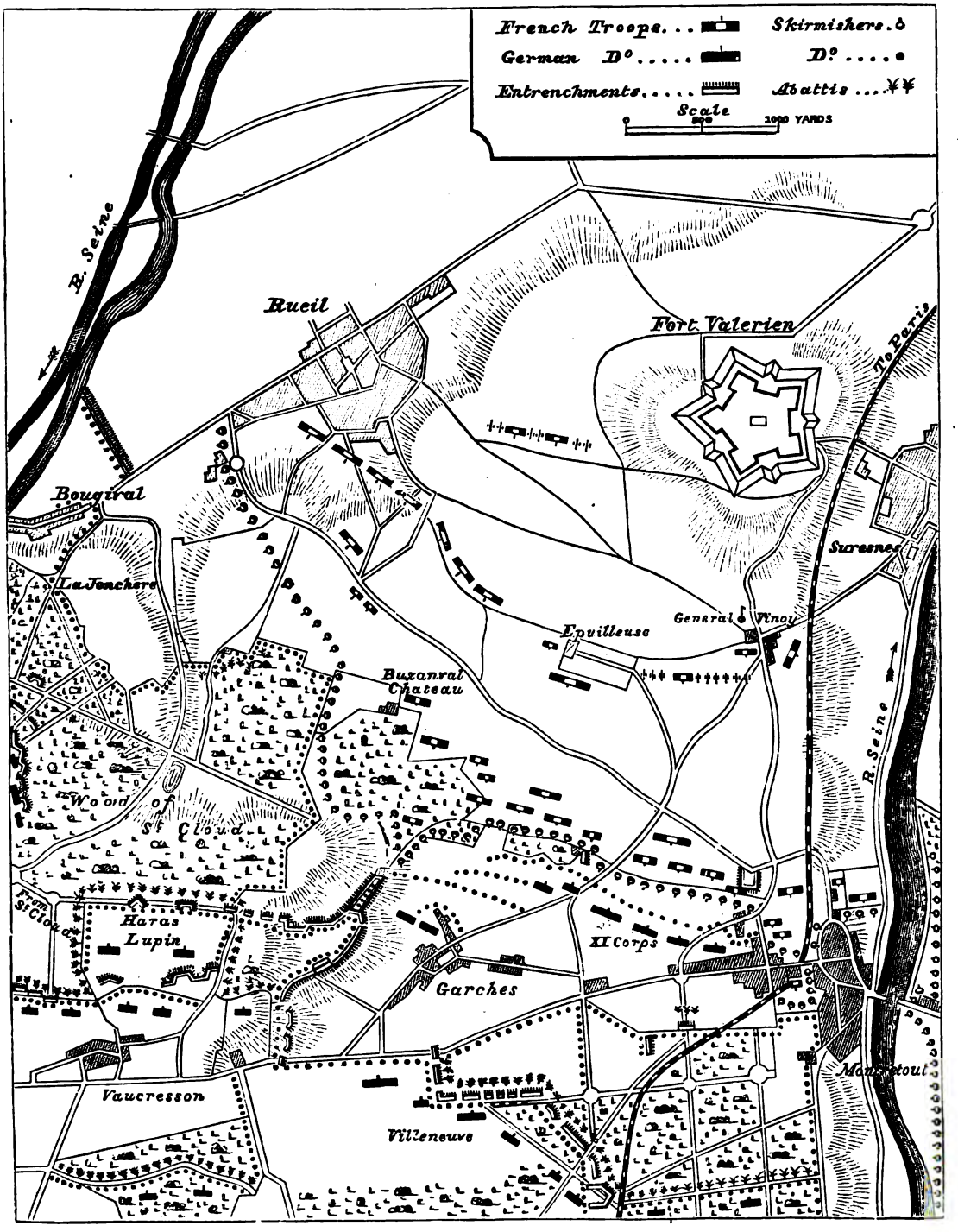
The Duke d'Aumale, the third surviving son of Louis Philippe, issued an address to the several constituencies by which he was invited to stand as a candidate for the National Assembly. In this document the Orleanist view of the situation was presented with some force. With regard to the question of peace or war, the Duke remarked that, as he had had no responsibility, direct or indirect, in the events or acts which produced the contest

and the existing situation, he had a right to stipulate for entire liberty—the more so as a forced inaction had been imposed on him when he urgently claimed the privilege of fighting for his country. Turning to the political question, he said that, when he considered the situation of France—her history, her traditions, and the events of recent years—he it any spirit of party, any exclusive tendency. In my sentiments, in my past, in the traditions of my family, I find nothing which separates me from the Republic. If it be under this form that France wishes freely and definitely to constitute her Government, I am ready to bow before her sovereignty, and I will remain her faithful servant.



PRINCE DE JOINVILLE.

was struck by the advantages presented by a Constitutional Monarchy. "I believe," he wrote, "it can respond to the legitimate aspirations of a democratic society, and can guarantee, together with order and security, every kind of progress and liberty. It is with a mixture of filial pride and patriotic sorrow that I compare France in her actual state with what she was under the reign of my father. As to this opinion, I have a right to hold it as a man, while, as a citizen, I believe it to be my duty to express it; but I do not mingle with Whether it be a Constitutional Monarchy or a Liberal Republic, it is by political probity, patience, and a spirit of concord and abnegation, that we can save, reconstitute, and regenerate France." Prince Joinville also issued an address similar in character to the Duke d'Aumale's. By the laws already alluded to, however, both Princes were ineligible as candidates for the National Legislature. Nevertheless, the Duke d'Aumale was elected in the department of the Oise by 50,000 out of 60,000 votes; while in the department of La



THE LAST SORTIE FROM PARIS, 19TH JANUARY, 1871.
Showing the Prussian lines of entrenchment, and the position of the French at 2 P M.

Manche, the poll was headed by Prince Joinville, with 97,634 votes. The election of the former was proclaimed; that of the latter not, owing to the scruples of the local officials with respect to the legal position of the candidate.

Among the Republican candidates of distinction was M. Louis Blanc, who, however, hesitated for some time whether or not he would present himself to the country. His first impression was that, having had no complicity in the war, or in the

conduct of the struggle, he ought not to connect his name with the conclusion of a peace so painful to France as that which would in all probability be signed. He therefore, in the first place, proposed that the functions of the Assembly should be limited to the acceptance or non-acceptance of peace; that it should then be dissolved, and that another Assembly should be elected to take into consideration the future of France. In that case, he would probably have reserved his candidature for the latter. Ultimately, however, he consented to stand for the Assembly that was to decide on peace or war; but he did so very unwillingly. It is certain that the representation of the country in such a Chamber was a very unpopular service. The main purpose for which that Chamber was called together was undoubtedly the making of peace, or the further carrying on of the war; and it was pretty nearly a foregone conclusion that the Prussian terms would be accepted, whatever they might prove to be. That the Assembly did ultimately proceed to settle the form of Government, does not at all show that it had any right to do so. This was only one of the many usurpations of a time characterised by a general disregard of popular powers. The knowledge, then, that agreement with the Prussian demands was the great end and object of the Assembly, deterred many persons from seeking the doubtful honour of a seat. In consequence of this, the electoral agitation was but slight. A correspondent of the *Times*, writing from Paris on the 6th of February—only two days before the elections—described the city as having all the quiet of a mill-pond. He attributed this repose in part to the distasteful circumstances of the time, and in part to the absence of the usual machinery of the elections. Instead of there being an election for each arrondissement of Paris, which would have given to the several districts their rival heroes, the Government decided that Paris and the Department of the Seine should elect forty-three candidates, not divided among districts, but all representing the entire constituency. Every elector could vote for forty-three candidates; but it is obvious that under such a system the special characteristics of many arrondissements would be lost in the general agreement on matters not likely to provoke discussion. "Belleville," said the *Times* writer, "may vote for a rabid Republican, but out of Belleville he has no chance; and therefore no man has a chance of election who is not pretty well known in Paris, and who does not command general respect. There are rival committees all over Paris, each recommending its own list of forty-three names to the electors; nearly every newspaper has its own separate list of candidates to recommend, and sometimes newspapers combine—thus, the three newspapers, the *Temps*, the *Siècle*, and the *Opinion Nationale*, combine to recommend a list of their own. But no combination, whether of newspaper editors or of committee-men, is strong enough to impose its authority on the electors, and they are free to choose their own forty-three as they please." This state of things very considerably checked the agitation that might otherwise have prevailed; yet in some quarters a good deal of revolutionary violence, in speech at least, was manifested. On the evening of February 4th, a club of Red Republicans at Belleville rejected the names of Gambetta, Victor Hugo, and Rochefort: the first because he was connected with the Government, the second because he was an "aristocrat," and the third because he was a traitor. Félix Pyat, Delescluze, Mottu, and other politicians of the communal order, were the favourites of Belleville. In many quarters there was a tendency to repudiate all members of the Government of the National Defence. In others the name of Garibaldi was received with cries of "No foreigners!" Some speakers demanded that the individuals who had surrendered the city should be arrested and tried. At the Liberal Republican Committee it was declared that no treaty of peace ratifying the cession of Alsace and Lorraine should ever be signed, and that Paris should continue its defence: at another meeting, a speaker gave it as his opinion that only a Robespierre could save France, and that the re-establishment of the guillotine was necessary. This sentiment was highly applauded, and the meeting shouted, "The members of the Government are cowards!" M. Félix Pyat, in his new journal, *Le Vengeur*, thus stated his own ideas of what the country required:—

"If I were the sovereign people, I would first of all dismiss all the monarchic generals. I would confide the sword of France to Garibaldi. I would order all my representatives to vote the exile of the several princes, and, if exile did not suffice, their death. I would seize as national property that of all priestly or secular traitors, who, notwithstanding the Republic, are plotting for a king. I would charge my representatives to constitute a revolutionary government, not at Bordeaux, an aristocratic, open, eccentric city, cornered at the further end of France, on the seaboard, without possible influence over any part of the soil, without means of defence or of succour, not peopled by artisans, but having a wandering, indifferent, cosmopolitan population of fast men, sailors, and foreigners. I would order my representatives to decree the *levée en masse*; not to give up an inch of our soil, nor a stone of our fortresses. I would prepare myself for

the sacrifice, knowing that the road to honour is that of safety; that Moscow saved Russia, Saragossa Spain, and Puebla Mexico. Wherefore, I would order war to the end, as the surest means of terminating the struggle. I would order the transfer of the Assembly to Lyons, only I learn that Lyons is no longer the second city of the Revolution, thanks to Gambetta, the Revolutionist. I would transport the Revolution into the Cevennes, and order the impeachment of the whole Government without exception—the Governors of Paris, and those of Tours, advocates and generals—Favre as well as Gambetta."

In utterances such as these we see the coming of the Commune, and of the frightful convulsions which made grimly memorable the spring of 1871.

The ferocity of M. Pyat was equalled by that of M. Rochefort. The latter published in the *Mot d'Ordre* a protest, which he said had received numerous signatures, against the interchange of visits between the Parisians and their enemies. This interchange was doubtless very injudicious under the circumstances of the time; but the language in which it was denounced was of the most unmeasured violence. The protesters said that they had loyally accepted the armistice; that a line of demarcation had been traced, but that it had not been observed either by the Germans or by the "curious and drunken" among the French. Consequently, the protesters proposed to violate the armistice, but it would be with the revolver and the poniard concealed beneath their garments, unless the Government should prohibit admission to the *banlieue* to all who had not special passes. "If," continued the protest, "it be a system of the Government—if it be sought to encourage union between the Parisians and the Germans, in order to facilitate the entry, after the armistice, of those barbarians into the capital of civilisation—it is a mistake, for we will burn Paris sooner than permit it to be desecrated. Allow us within our dwellings to eat our black bread, and prevent the cowards from going forth to barter the Gallic pride for a morsel of bacon. If that be not done, we are determined without delay to break the armistice, and to destroy in detail the cowards and barbarians who are demolishing the works of our forefathers." The threat to burn Paris was another terrible foreshadowing of the days of civil war which were approaching. Exasperated at the failure of the defence, the Red Republicans were fast learning the bitter lesson of civil discord, and were meditating how best they could turn the sword against their own countrymen. Where the intercourse complained of was resorted to for the mere sake of curiosity or of indulgence, it was no doubt highly reprehensible; but in many cases the wretched, famished people were indebted to the Prussians for the very bread which kept them alive. The *Daily News* correspondent with the Crown Prince of Prussia, writing on the 3rd of February, said that the hungry people on the bridge of Neuilly afforded a sight not soon to be forgotten. The unfortunate creatures actually clamoured for bread. The Prussian end of the bridge was held by Landwehr of the Guard, and here were assembled carts and wagons, trucks, omnibuses, and other vehicles, which had brought passengers or provisions to the boundary-line. Bread was the article most in demand. The persons forming the crowd were neatly dressed, and the avidity for food, said the correspondent, was out of all proportion to the respectable appearance of the bargainers. Young women were leaning over the barrier, basket in hand, to beg the Landwehrmen to fetch them some bread—"two loaves; three, if possible; as much as the money would buy." This went on for a long while, and the excitement was of the most extreme order, though characterised by perfect good-nature, and by a sort of hastily-established friendship between the conquerors and the conquered.

Garibaldi, though objected to by some of the Red Republican clubs of Paris, because he was a foreigner, was elected at Nice, the city where he was born in days when it was a Sardinian and not a French possession. On arriving at Bordeaux after his election, he addressed a letter to some of his friends, in which he said that he should vote for a Republic—"for a Government of honest men—for a Government which, falling through corruption, maintains itself through its virtue, and which alone can prevent a revolution in France before six months." Far less than six months proved that it was not the Republic which could prevent another revolution. As to the conditions of peace, Garibaldi demanded the state existing before the war—meaning, of course, the territorial integrity of the country; but he admitted that the war expenses must necessarily be paid by the millions of "ayes" which were in favour of a war, "and more especially by the Imperialists and priests who had instigated the people to vote in that sense." Garibaldi seems here to have confounded the *plebiscitum* of May, 1870, by which the Liberal reforms of the Empire were affirmed, with the subsequent vote of the Chambers in favour of the war, in July. On the former occasion, the cause of quarrel between France and Germany had not arisen, and the policy of the Empire was supposed to be eminently pacific, and was indeed supported on that account. The millions of "ayes,"

therefore, had not been instigated to vote for war, either by the Imperialists, the priests, or any one else. The two Chambers, however, supported the war by an immense majority after the Hohenzollern complication; and it is probable enough that the great mass of the electors would have ratified that decision if a new appeal to the country had been made. With respect to the war indemnity, Garibaldi thought it should be determined by an equal number of neutral Powers on both sides, at the option of the contending parties. On this subject of an indemnity, the *Neue Freie Presse*, of Vienna, alluding to an alleged demand by the Germans of eight milliards of francs, said :—

"Germany has no right to make such a demand, which could only be justified by the reasons of Brennus. All the loans raised by Germany for the war do not amount to more than two milliards, or the fourth part of the sum alleged to be demanded; and the amount raised by these loans is still far from being expended. Prussia has carried on the war economically, in accordance with the principle of Wallenstein and Napoleon I. : 'War must support itself.' Are the contributions which have been exacted, are the requisitions and the enormous quantity of war material that has been captured, to go for nothing? In all the territories occupied by the Germans, and not only in those which are to be annexed, the regular taxes have flowed into the Prussian coffers instead of the French. This considerable amount must also, in common justice, be deducted from the expenses of the war. Again, the districts which are to be annexed, with the large amount of taxes which they will pay annually, represent a money value equivalent to the greater part of the expenses of the war. When, some time ago, the French were willing to purchase peace by payment of a large war-indemnity, it was on condition that no part of their territory should be annexed. To demand now both the milliards and the two provinces is anything but moderate. When Austria concluded peace with France in 1859, she ceded Lombardy, but did not pay a farthing; on the contrary, some money was paid to her. By the Treaty of Vienna, the part of the Danish National Debt which fell on Schleswig-Holstein was taken over by the conquerors, and afterwards by Prussia alone. Thus Prussia adopted the principle that in cases of annexation the conqueror takes over, together with the territory, a proportionate part of the national debt of the conquered country. Therefore, in the present case, the annexation of French territory ought further to diminish the amount of the war-indemnity. People in Prussia cite the example of Napoleon I. in justification of their demand; but, judged even by that standard, their present claim for compensation appears excessive. The Treaty of Champagne fixed the war-indemnity to be paid by Prussia at 140 millions of francs, and the contributions which had been levied had brought in about 500 millions of francs. Moreover, Art. 24 of the Treaty of Tilsit provided, 'The public debts of the territories ceded by Prussia go over to the new owners.' If Prussia wished to mete with the same measure with which it was measured to her, she could not demand even one milliard."

The rumour that eight milliards would be demanded proved to be in excess of the fact, though it had originated in Versailles; but it will be seen that nothing less than five milliards would content the victors. It was remarked by the Berlin correspondent of the *Times*—who generally wrote with a strong Prussian feeling—that the wish to cripple France, and to disable her from recommencing the war, was the one thought uppermost in the minds of men then, as it had been six months before. In the first stage of the armistice negotiations, while the conditions of peace were rather guessed at than actually known, some of the Berlin papers advised moderation; but they spoke with feebleness and hesitation, and the majority of the journals perpetually inculcated the necessity of taking stringent precautionary measures against further attacks by France. Yet the issue of the war had clearly shown that the Germans had little to fear from the French. The *Breslauer Zeitung*, even while asserting the propriety of guarding against the aggressive policy of France, remarked that the exaggerated notions which had prevailed as to the fighting capacity of the French were dispersed by the fact that half a million of those invincibles were prisoners of war. The worth of their own troops, on the other hand, was more correctly appreciated by the Germans. Still, it was argued, Germany must be protected against further aggression. As a consequence of the war, the French idea of the Rhine being the natural frontier between the two countries was exploded, and the line of the Vosges had become a living reality. "Our only aim in unsheathing the sword," said the Breslau journalist, "was to defend our hearths and homes, and, having so done, to erect a barrier which should render it difficult for the French to attack us again. All classes of society are full of this one thought. Every one of our gallant soldiers, of our smarting tax-payers, has realised it. Not with a 'light heart' have we gone through the trying days from Sedan to Metz. We have deeply felt and lamented the sacrifices they entailed on us, and we have come to comprehend that all our sufferings will be useless unless we inflict a severe punishment on the enemy." The Germans forgot that France had already been punished to the point of exhaustion. If the French had proved their own military incapacity, and the Germans had shown their immense superiority, the danger for the future could hardly have been very

great. It is impossible to disguise the fact—though the Germans naturally wished to do so—that a desire for increase of territory, for its own sake, very largely affected the popular mind in Germany. That Alsace and Lorraine were Teutonic appanages, and that they must sooner or later be reclaimed, had been fixed ideas in the Fatherland, and especially in the northern parts, for some generations; and the war was considered to afford a decent pretext for carrying out the long-cherished wish. If Germany was formerly open to the attacks of France, it may certainly with equal truth be now said that France is all but defenceless against the encroachments of Germany.

The general result of the elections was more in favour of the Orleanist party than of any other. It was estimated at Bordeaux that the approximate numbers of the different parties were—Orleanists, 400; Republicans, 150; Legitimists, 50; Buonapartists, 20; doubtful, 30. This calculation may not have been absolutely exact; but it seems to have been correct in the main. Two leading facts were unquestionable—that the Imperialists found very few supporters, and that the majority of the Chamber was not in favour of a Republican form of government. Paris, as might be expected, returned a large number of extreme Republicans; but the provinces, for the most part, gave their votes to candidates of monarchical principles. Of the Paris candidates, those who obtained the full complement of votes—viz., 68,200—were Louis Blanc, Victor Hugo, General Garibaldi, Gambetta, Quinet, Lockroy, Rochefort, Jorgneaux, Gambon, Pyat, Delescluze, Henri Martin, Pothuan, Saisset, Malon, Schœlcher, Dorian, Brisson, Ranc, Langlois, Sauvage, Martin, Bernard, Marc Dufraisse, Frebault, Vacherot, Clemenceau, Greppo, Jean Brunet, Councel, Littré, Millière, Léon Say, Ledru Say, Ledru Rollin, Topain, Floquet, and Peyrat. The simultaneous election of a certain number of notabilities for several departments rendered from thirty to forty re-elections necessary. M. Thiers was elected in eighteen departments, General Trochu in nine, General Changarnier in four. M. Gambetta was elected at Marseilles and at Oran (Algiers), M. Jules Favre in the Departments of the Rhône and Ain, M. Dufaure four times, General d'Aurelles de Paladines and Admiral Jauréguiberry twice. Among the deputies elected were several men who were prisoners in Paris under the capitulation—viz., MM. Chaper, Heme, Bocher, De Witt, D'Harcourt (Staff-officer of Marshal MacMahon), and Casimir Périer, who had been sent as a hostage to Germany. The candidate who was chosen by the largest number of constituencies was, as will be seen by the foregoing list, M. Thiers—a very significant fact, and a foreshadowing of the new Power about to take possession of the political stage. To facilitate the elections, the German telegraph offices throughout France were ordered to receive and despatch the telegrams of the French authorities relative to the necessary operations; and the censorship of the press in the occupied districts was for a time suspended. Alsace and Lorraine, moreover, were allowed to elect representatives, without any restrictions on those who were known to be identified with the local opposition to annexation to Germany.

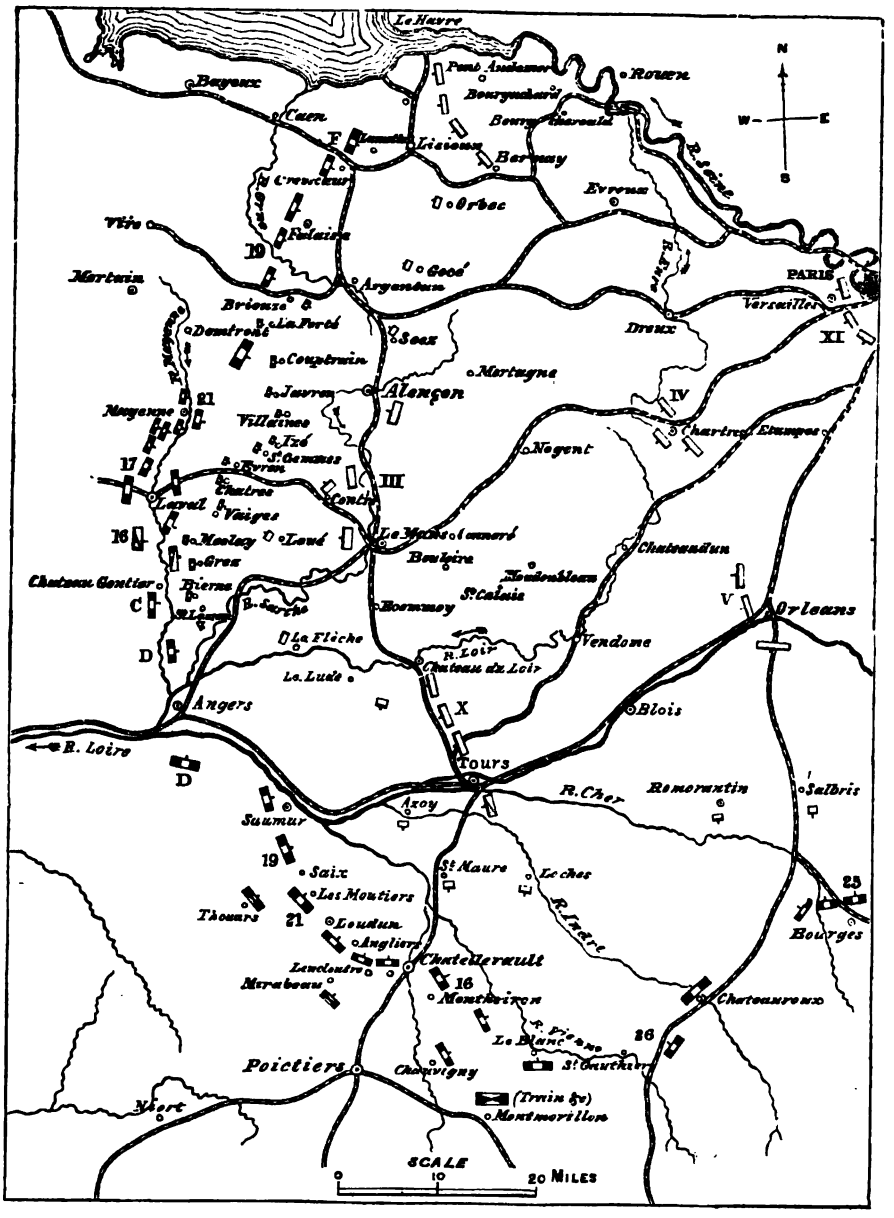
The National Assembly met for the first time at Bordeaux on Sunday, February 12th, and, although the electoral lists had not been fully completed, the members resolved to proceed to business. M. Benoît d'Azy, as the eldest member present, took the chair, and said, "The existing circumstances are a reason for the immediate constitution of the National Assembly, although our full numbers are not yet here." These words were received with applause, and it was unanimously decided that the Chamber should be at once constituted. Four secretaries were then elected, and the Assembly adjourned to the next day. The meeting took place in the theatre of Bordeaux, a large and very handsome building. The place was lighted by three grand chandeliers, owing to the small amount of daylight that came in. The members sat in the pit and the surrounding stalls. The President's chair was placed on the stage, in the centre of the line of foot-lights. The tribune occupied the position of the prompter's box; on each side were seats for the short-hand writers; and the secretaries were ranged on the stage, to the right and left of the chair. When the House reassembled on the 13th, M. d'Azy again took the chair by seniority, and Messieurs Jules Favre, Jules Simon, Emmanuel Arago, Eugène Pelletan, Garnier Pagés, Glais-Bizoin, and Magnin, entered the House together, walked up the centre of the pit, and took their seats on the row which was for the time regarded as the Ministerial bench. M. Crémieux, who favoured the views of Gambetta, and was said to be greatly disgusted with his colleagues of Paris, simply took his seat as a spectator in one of the boxes. M. Thiers, after a little while, seated himself on the Ministerial bench, between M. Jules Simon and M. Arago. He did not address the House during the sitting. Admiral Jauréguiberry, and a few young officers in uniform, were present; and a priest took his place as one of the representatives of the nation. Garibaldi, who was loudly cheered by the public and the National Guards

when he entered, handed up to the President a short letter, which was read by M. d'Azy. It was to the effect that he had been elected by several French departments on Republican principles, but that, under the circumstances (he here alluded to a report that the majority intended to oppose his admission), he judged it expedient to resign. M. Jules Favre then, in the name of himself and his colleagues, both at Bordeaux and Paris, resigned the powers exercised by the Government of the National Defence into the hands of the people's representatives. He said:—"We have borne the burden of government, but we had no other preoccupation than to be able, under existing circumstances, to remit our temporary plans into the hands of the National Assembly. Thanks to your patriotism and reunion, we hope that the country, having been taught by misfortune, will know how to heal her wounds, and to reconstitute the national existence. We no longer hold any power. We depend entirely upon your decision, and we confidently expect the constitution of the new and legitimate powers." M. Favre then announced that he and his colleagues would remain at their posts to maintain respect for the laws until the establishment of the new Government. He asked permission to return to his post, in order to fulfil the difficult and delicate duties imposed upon him, adding, "I confidently await your judgment. I hope that I shall be able to affirm to those with whom we have to negotiate that the country can do its duty. The enemy must know that we have the honour of France at heart. He will also know that all France will decide. In conformity with the eventuality already foreseen by the Convention, a prolongation of the armistice will probably become necessary. Let us render this prolongation as short as possible, in order not to lose a moment; and let us but think of the sufferings of the population in the invaded districts. I hope that I may depend on your concurrence to obtain this needful delay."



EXAMINING A DESERTER.

As the sitting was drawing to an end, Garibaldi (who, having given in his resignation some time before, was certainly out of order in endeavouring to address the House) advanced towards the



POSITIONS OF THE ARMIES NORTH AND SOUTH OF THE LOIRE, 29TH JANUARY, 1871.

French Troops..... . Outposts..... . German Troops..... . Outposts..... .

German Troops marked in Roman Numerals. French Corps in Arabic Numerals. F. Francs-Tireurs. D. The Division Cleret. C. The Division Cathelineau; these are small detached corps. Train and convoys marked

tribune, and M. Esquiros, deputy for Marseilles, apparently fearing the interruptions which actually ensued, exclaimed in a loud voice, "Garibaldi asked to speak some time ago; hear him!" This was the signal for one of those scenes of disgraceful tumult which are so frequent in French Assemblies. Some of the members shouted, "Hear Garibaldi!" Others retorted with "No Garibaldi!" "No Italian!" "Let him hold his tongue!" The public auditors took part with the illustrious chief, and several National Guards said, with reference to the objectors, "It is infamous. These men are sold." Some one roared out from an upper box, "You rural majority, listen to the voice of the towns!" The President at length put on his hat, and gave orders that the galleries should be cleared of strangers; but before the mandate could be obeyed, Garibaldi abandoned the attempt to speak, and the House excitedly broke up. As the Italian general left the building, the National Guards presented

arms to him. M. Thiers went to the officer in command, and passionately inquired why his men acted so. "Because," replied the officer, "he is General Garibaldi; because he is a deputy; because he came to fight for France; and because he is the only general who has taken a Prussian flag."* The old hero (who was dressed in the well-known red shirt, grey cloak, and wide-brimmed felt hat) rose up in his carriage, in the midst of great cheering, and made a brief speech, in the course of which he said:—"I have always known how to distinguish the France of the priests from Republican France, which I am ready to defend with the devotion of a son." On the same day he sent a letter to the *Siècle*, addressed to the departments which had elected him, and thus stating the motives of his conduct:—"I accepted your trust in order to record my vote in favour of the Republic. That last duty accomplished, my mission is at an end, and I place in your hands the powers which you have conferred upon me." He shortly afterwards left for Marseilles, from which, on the 15th, he embarked for Caprera, the little island in the Mediterranean where, for several years, he led almost the life of a hermit, except when revolutionary storms called him forth into the battle-field again.

Immediately before his departure, he said to the crowd which had assembled to see him off:—"Have confidence; it is especially now that you should redouble your efforts. Whatever may be your present misfortunes, France will still be France, and will again become a great nation—the leader of peoples. Let us hope that the majority will understand that the Republican form of government is alone suited to the country, and is the only one that can elevate it morally and materially. In any case, you, who are Republicans, prepare for the struggle; know and love one another, and make ready to take the revenge which is your due. We shall meet again." Notwithstanding these speeches, Garibaldi must have quitted France with no very hopeful or grateful feelings. The priestly party detested him, and even many of the French Republicans regarded their Italian friend and fellow-worker with distrust and jealousy. He had done more against the invaders than most of the native generals had been able to accomplish; and this was enough to wound French vanity beyond the reach of ready forgiveness.

Further scenes of excitement occurred in the Assembly during the sitting of February 16th, when the Republican and Monarchical sections—or the urban and rural representatives, as they soon came to be called—indulged in angry recriminations against one another. The Chamber subsequently elected M. Grévy as its President, by 519 out of 538 votes recorded. This gentleman was the President of the Council of State in the Government of the National Defence, and was well fitted for his new office, being a moderate and thoughtful politician, of high personal character. As far back as the latter days of October, M. Grévy had been in favour of an armistice, with a view to consulting the nation on its own fate; and he was now elected to the Presidency of a Chamber whose special business it was to terminate a war which was rapidly exhausting the country. At the same time, the Assembly elected as its Vice-Presidents M. Martel (Buonapartist), by 417 votes; M. Benoit d'Azy (Legitimist), by 391 votes; and M. Malleville (Orleanist), by 285 votes. The Bureaux were also chosen, and Questors were appointed.

The Assembly now proceeded to a most momentous act. Messieurs Dufaure, Grévy, Malleville, Vilet, and Barthélémy St.-Hilaire, brought forward the following resolution—"That M. Thiers is appointed Head of the Executive Power, which he will exercise under the control of the Assembly, and will select Ministers to assist him in his mission." This motion was affirmed on the following day (February 17th), and M. Thiers, in the course of the evening, received the congratulations of the Ministers of England, Austria, Italy, Spain, and Portugal. The rise of this aged statesman to the supreme authority in France, after so many years' exclusion from office, was one of the most extraordinary results of the war. The *Daily News* correspondent at Bordeaux, writing before the election of M. Thiers as Chief of the Executive, and referring only to his having been returned by a large number of constituencies, remarked:—"I know nothing so creditable to the instinct of universal suffrage as the fact that, while there has been no sufficient time to prepare for the elections, and telegraphic and postal communications are difficult, an immense proportion of the constituency of France, seeing that hard conditions of peace are necessary, has fixed upon M. Thiers as the man who, better than any other, can negotiate the ultimate terms, and recommend them to be accepted in language so cunningly poised as to be less hurtful to French vanity than that which any other man could command. If France is ruined, she is at least sure to get from M. Thiers a first-class interment." What made his new elevation more extraordinary was that his previous attempts in connection with the war were not of a successful character. He had failed in his diplomatic missions

* Correspondent of the *Daily News*.

to England, Austria, and Russia, in September; he had failed again in his armistice negotiations at the commencement of November; and, although these abortive results may not have been in the slightest degree owing to him, Frenchmen seldom forgive the unfortunate. The country, however, was utterly tired of the amateur legislation of declamatory enthusiasts, and probably felt that the new Government would acquire weight and dignity in the eyes of foreign Powers if the supreme direction of affairs were placed in the hands of an old, experienced, and cautious statesman, of long and high reputation in the diplomacy of Europe. M. Thiers, on his part, had omitted no opportunity of suggesting himself to the popular mind as the guiding genius of the young Republic. The correspondent last quoted was sitting one day, shortly before the elections, in the office of one of M. Gambetta's principal secretaries at Bordeaux, when M. Thiers came in. He said he was "disgusted" with Trochu, and described Jules Favre as covering himself with everlasting disgrace for having, after his proud words about not surrendering an inch of the national territory nor a stone of the national fortresses, agreed to an armistice which he should have cut his right hand off rather than have signed. He denounced the Provisional Government generally for incapacity and carelessness; asserted that there had been a shocking and improvident waste of provisions early in the siege; and attributed the fall of Paris to this mismanagement. The secretary then said to M. Thiers, "I have watched your literary and political career for forty years, and the saying of yours which I most admire is that of 1849—'The Republic is the government which divides us the least.' Allow me to ask whether, under existing circumstances, you are willing to repeat that dictum." M. Thiers vehemently replied, "I am. I am not now an Orleanist; I am frankly in favour of the Republic, and it would have been better for you if your Government had been more decidedly Republican from the beginning. A great many Orleanists have been trafficking with Prussia. I am ashamed of them, and repudiate them." No change of opinion on the part of so variable a politician as M. Thiers, however, is surprising; and this perhaps less than any. He saw before him a fair probability of placing himself at the head of the State; and he was not inclined to give the service of his genius and influence to the restoration of a Royal family under whom he could only have occupied a secondary position, with the constant risk of removal at the caprice of a monarch or the humour of a Parliamentary majority.

Fears of revolutionary violence seem to have beset the Government. The approaches to the building where the National Assembly held its sittings were surrounded by bodies of National Guards, Infantry of the Line, and Cavalry, so that it was difficult to get near the Assembly. Before the President opened the sitting of the 17th, one of the deputies rose and said:—"Citizens, in order to reach this place I have been compelled to pass through several lines of armed men. Henceforth I shall come armed also." In consequence of this complaint, and of a protest on the part of the Municipality of Bordeaux, fewer troops were afterwards placed on duty near the Chamber. The proceedings on the 17th had reference to the painful question of Alsace and Lorraine. M. Keller laid on the table a declaration, signed by the deputies of the Lower and Upper Rhine, Meurthe, and Moselle (departments in the provinces now threatened by German annexation), which the subscribers prayed the Assembly to take into consideration. It ran:—

"The National Assembly, France, and Europe, which are witnessing the exactions of Prussia, cannot permit the completion of an act which would have for effect to extort from France Alsace and Lorraine. We are, and will for ever remain, French, in good as well as in ill-fortune. We have sealed with our own blood the indissoluble pact which unites us to France, and we affirm once more, in the midst of all our trials, our immovable loyalty towards the Fatherland. France could not abandon those who will not be separated from her. The Assembly, sprung from universal suffrage, cannot itself ratify demands tending to destroy the nationality of a whole population; neither can the people, in its electoral colleges, allow it. Europe likewise cannot confirm these criminal attempts, and cannot let a whole people be treated as a herd of wild beasts. Peace, in consideration of a cession of territory, will never be a durable peace, but merely a momentary truce, which would soon be followed by another war. As to ourselves, inhabitants of Alsace and Lorraine, we are ready to resume fighting, and therefore we shall beforehand hold as null and void any offers, treaty, votes, or *plébiscite*, which would have for effect to sever Alsace and Lorraine from France. We proclaim our right to remain united to French soil, and we formally engage to defend our honour."

In presenting this declaration, M. Keller urged his colleagues to oppose moral to brute force, and to proclaim the inviolability of the connection with Alsace and Lorraine. "We hold forth our hand to you," he said, in winding up his remarks; "do not refuse to hold forth yours to us." These observations were received with the utmost enthusiasm; and the Assembly, by acclamation, voted the urgency of discussing the question raised by

M. Keller, which M. Rochefort demanded should at once be referred to the Bureaux, "so that the majority of the House could give to the negotiators imperative orders, or perfect freedom to conduct the negotiations." Had the Assembly assumed the position which M. Keller desired to see it take, the result would probably have been to plunge the country back again into war; but M. Thiers interposed, and, by seeming to assent to the wishes of the House, led the belligerent members away from the course proposed to be followed. He said that from the bottom of his heart he fully shared M. Keller's feelings, and that, in presence of the grave circumstances in which they were placed, it was the duty of the Chamber to adopt the only decision becoming its dignity. It should at once discuss and vote on the proposal. The House, he argued, could not await the constitution of a Government, but must itself decide, in the full enjoyment of its privileges, the responsibility it was to assume. It was important that its wishes should be known. "As to myself," continued M. Thiers, "I have given my whole life to my country, and I am still prepared to devote all my efforts to France. But it is the duty of the House to settle this question. Let us not wait twenty-four hours; let us meet immediately in our Bureaux, and declare our wishes." In the existing temper of the Assembly, it is very likely that, had M. Thiers doggedly opposed its aspirations, some step would have been taken rendering peace an impossibility. But, by apparently yielding to what seemed to be the desire of the national representatives, and by throwing the responsibility entirely on them, he saved the country from a danger which momentarily threatened it. The House adjourned at the conclusion of M. Thiers' short speech, and the question was handed over to a committee, which shrank from the perilous honour of deciding absolutely on the policy to be adopted by the country, and contented itself with a resolution expressing the warmest sympathy with the populations of the East, officially acknowledging the receipt of their declaration, and at the same time handing the subject over to the peace-negotiators, to be dealt with by them as they might find practicable.

Such was the only safe conclusion to which the Assembly could have come. In the event of its having acted to the contrary effect, and carried a resolution that France would not on any account part with Alsace and Lorraine, Prussia would undoubtedly have broken off the negotiations for peace; and the renewal of the war at that time, and in the exhausted state to which France was then reduced, could have resulted in nothing but the most dire extreme of ruin. The exasperation of the Germans at such an unexpected prolongation of their labours and trials may be sufficiently guessed from the degree of animosity which had been reached during the previous three months. That this would have been intensified by a recommencement of the struggle when all was supposed to be over, cannot be questioned. That further demands would have been made, after the fresh failure which must inevitably have attended the efforts of France, is equally clear. Nothing could have been gained by such an act of wild and desperate defiance, and France would have lost still further territory and still more valuable lives, while postponing indefinitely any chance that might yet remain for her reassuming the position of a first-class Power.

CHAPTER XX.

State of France in February—Nearly a Million French Soldiers captured or driven on to Neutral Territory—Causes of the National Failure—Republican Incompetency and Corruption—Dishonest Contracts—The Condition of Bourbaki's Army previous to Surrender—Political Divisions—Contemplated *Coup d'État* of Gambetta—Charges of Extravagance—Multiplication of Factions—Paris and the Provinces—Monarchical Reaction—Recovery of the Capital from its Depression—Formation of a Ministry by M. Thiers—Appointment of a Parliamentary Committee to assist in the Peace Negotiations—The Capitulation of Belfort—Progress of the Peace Negotiations—Extension of the Armistice—Signature of the Preliminaries of Peace—Excitement in Paris—Proclamation of the Government—Meeting of the Deputies of the Extreme Left—Communication of the Preliminaries of Peace to the National Assembly—Text of the Preliminary Treaty—Interposition of England with respect to the Money Indemnity—Letter of M. Jules Favre to Lord Granville on the Appointment of the Duke de Broglie as French Ambassador—Interview of the Duke with Lord Granville—The Policy of England.

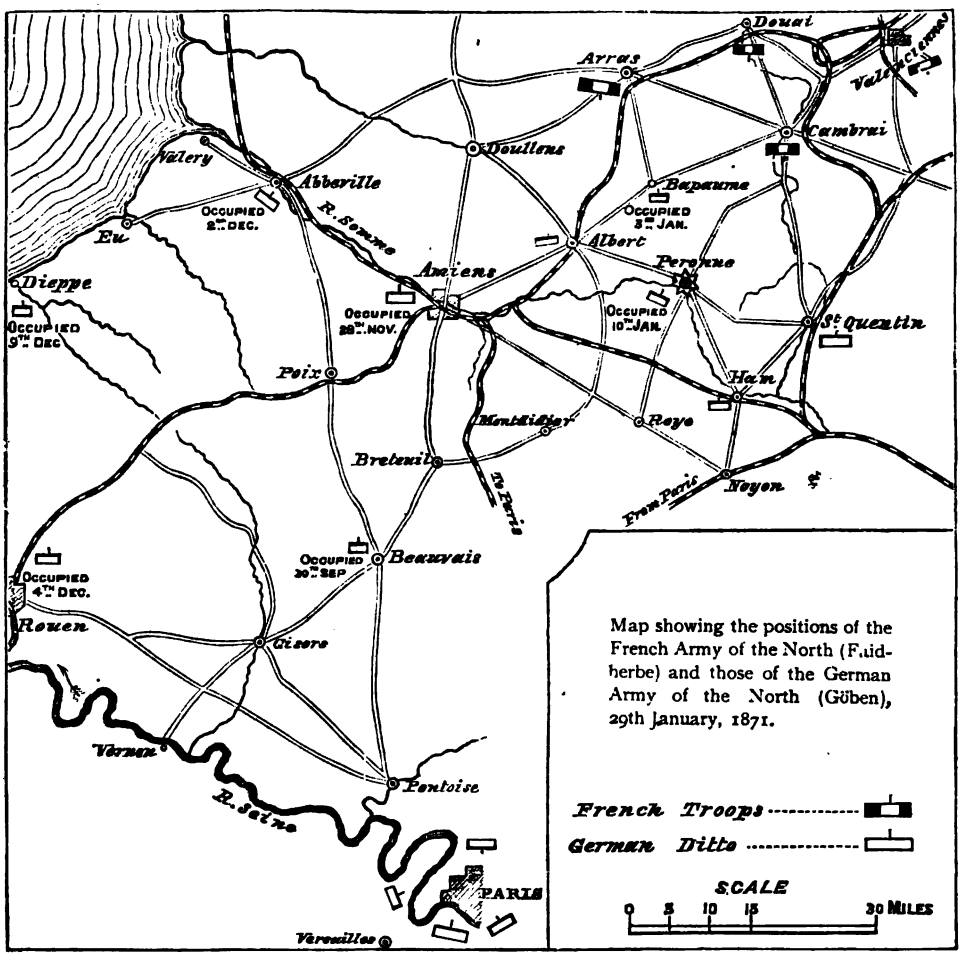
THE elections being now over, and the Assembly in session, France could turn her thoughts to a general survey of her own condition, and could estimate with some degree of calmness the effects of the recent struggle and the prospects of the future. In the middle of February it was stated

that 120,000 soldiers, 80,000 Mobiles, and 300,000 National Guards were imprisoned in Paris; that 80,000 men of Bourbaki's army were "neutralised" in Switzerland; that nearly 200,000 regulars had been captured at Sedan and Metz; that 50,000 had been made prisoners at Orleans and Le Mans; and that the number of French soldiers taken at Strasburg and other fortresses, and during the operations of Manteuffel and Göben in the North, swelled the amount in round numbers to nearly a million men. Never, in so short a time, had the power of a nation supposed to be great collapsed so tragically and so utterly. The constant talk of treachery might help to save the popular self-love from too bitter a sense of the country's shortcomings; but to all thoughtful minds it must have been evident that nothing but a deep and widespread national degeneracy could account for disasters so overwhelming and failure so complete. It was very easy, and for the time very pleasant and reassuring, to say that all this misfortune was due to the system of government pursued by the Emperor Napoleon; but, supposing that system to have been as bad as the Republican party were fond of asserting, its emergence out of the revolution of 1848 argued a large amount of antecedent corruption to render it possible; for healthy communities do not suddenly beget deadly political diseases, nor can less than twenty years of any form of rule drag down a really great nation to the level of a South American Republic. If the French people were betrayed, it was by their own inherent vices and follies, which were in truth far more active and conspicuous under the Republic than under the Empire. Incompetency and dishonesty were rife. Army after army was led forth to defeat, and the fault was not so much with the generals as with the poor quality of the men (at least, in several instances), and the execrable way in which the armies were appointed. Shoes with pasteboard soles were supplied to the troops to the extent of many thousands—a fact which sufficiently explains the barefooted condition of the unfortunate men after a long march. The Bordeaux correspondent of the *Times* stated that contracts were made with unqualified persons, who offered no real guarantee for the serviceable quality of the goods they furnished; and that favouritism, if not something worse, had been frequently exhibited. The military intendant at Lyons, a Corsican named Testa, was dismissed, on this account, about the close of the war; and the local journals said that he largely contributed to the disasters in the East by his shameful neglect of duty. Ammunition and rations were constantly deficient. The bodies of troops passing through Lyons were frequently for whole days without bread to eat, and, in the bitterest weather, without wood to burn. This (continued the *Times* correspondent) had been denounced repeatedly by the Lyons press, as well as by general officers; but the Government did nothing till the mischief was effected. Letters from soldiers of the Army of the Loire complained of the wretched quality of the cartridges served out to them, only one-half of which contained bullets, while others were composed of slugs, and a great many had no caps.

The most frightful failure in the way of military administration, however, was in connection with Bourbaki's army. On the fugitives approaching the line of mountains dividing Switzerland from France, they knew neither their own position nor that of the enemy, but wandered up and down along the frontier, feeding on raw potatoes which they found in the deserted villages, and drinking nothing but snow-water. When at length they crossed into Switzerland, and entered the village of Neuchâtel, they flung themselves like a pack of famished wolves on the food that was offered them, and were forced to appease their ravenous cravings in some degree before they could give any expression to their gratitude. Others were in such a miserable condition for want of the commonest appliances of surgery, that, as they rushed into the Swiss villages, the wounded cried out, "Lint, lint! for God's sake, some lint!"—the agony arising from frozen wounds overcoming even the rage of hunger. The horses were in an equally deplorable state. They were scarcely able to stand from weakness; their legs were swollen, their tails and manes rotted away, and their coats matted with dirt. An English eye-witness said, in a communication to the *Times*:—"There is but one feeling now in Switzerland—that it is contemptible to fight such poor wretches, and boast of victory afterwards. One Swiss soldier very aptly described the campaign as wolves chasing a flock of mangy sheep. But if there is indignation against the Prussians, there is yet more against a Government who could send forth an army, in the depth of one of the severest winters known, with mere summer clothing, and without regular supplies of food and fodder. The trousers of the men are of thin cloth, often so rotten as to rend on the least strain, while the soles of their boots are stuffed with brown paper. Specimens, I understand, are in the hands of the authorities at Lausanne. Both officers and men complain bitterly of their chiefs, and of the heads of departments. They tell of generals without staffs, of officers who had never fired a shot, and of

general incompetence; of days without food, and nights spent in the bitter cold, none daring to light a fire for fear of attracting the shot of their pursuing enemy." But for the generosity of the Swiss—the rich and poor alike — these unhappy creatures would have perished in even greater numbers than they did.

When the more reasonable part of the French people came to review these facts in the quiet of the armistice, they saw how utterly unprepared was the country for continuing the struggle with Germany. But maladministration was not the only source of national weakness. Political divisions, which threatened to rend the country into hostile camps, were a no less fruitful cause of that depression which gave to the Germans their position of enormous superiority. The antagonism between the Paris and Bordeaux Governments on the subject of the disabilities decree very nearly led to civil war while France was negotiating with the victorious enemy. Even after M. Gambetta had resigned, his subordinates made a show of resistance, and M. Arago was obliged to tell them that he had got gendarmes at the door. It was positively asserted at Bordeaux that M. Gambetta and his friends had organised a sort of *coup d'état*, and had drawn up a list of more than forty persons who were to be arrested, including the conductors of the twelve journals which protested against his electoral decree. The plot would perhaps have been carried out but for the interference of Admiral Fourichon, who vehemently rebuked the would-be dictator, and, according to one account, threatened him with personal violence.* The moderate papers in that part of France denounced the whole administration of M. Gambetta. The *Courrier de la Gironde*, an Orleanist journal, affirmed that he drew 9,000 francs a month, and added:—



Map showing the positions of the French Army of the North (Faidherbe) and those of the German Army of the North (Göben), 29th January, 1871.

* *Times* Bordeaux correspondent.



BOURBAKI'S ARMY IN SWITZERLAND.

"If ever there was a frantic squandering of the finances, an audacious pillage of the public treasure—if ever the national purse might justly be compared to a sieve, allowing its contents to escape by countless openings—it is since the 4th of September. Numerous 'patriots,' who before that date were unknown and penniless, now parade in insolent luxury, and scandalise Bordeaux by their cynical prodigality." The same paper published an article under the heading of "M. Gambetta's Latest Lie," in which the writer accused the Delegate War Minister of deceiving Paris, all through the war, as to the true state of France, and of assuring the Paris Government that he was having the conditions of the armistice carried out, as well as the decree relating to the elections, at the very time when he was suppressing that decree, holding back the *Official Journal*, and keeping Jules Simon almost in a state of captivity, to prevent his promulgating the orders from the capital. "To-day," said another paper—the *Français*—"the veil is torn away, and the Republican lie is confounded as was the Imperial lie. It will be for the Assembly—that is to say, for the country—at last to secure the triumph of honesty and truth." The Paris *Figaro* reckoned the lies, the bragging, and the crass ignorance of the journalists as a third part of the misfortunes of France; and denied that the defence of Paris had been at all characterised by heroism. The number of the factions was legion. Not only was the country divided into the two great parties of Monarchists and Republicans, but each of those parties was subdivided into several sections. The former was split into Legitimists, Orleanists, and Buonapartists; and, although the two branches of the House of Bourbon made an attempt at fusion, it came to naught, while, with regard to the Buonapartists, it was well known that Prince Napoleon was at issue on some important points with the Empress, if not with the Emperor. The extreme of division, however, was reached by the Republicans. There were the Moderate Republicans, the Red Republicans, and a third body, with no specific designation, which lay between the two, and of which at that time the most prominent member was M. Gambetta. The Red Republicans had hardly any cohesion at all. They wrangled and fought among themselves like dogs over a chance piece of carrion; and charges of treason, dishonesty, and despotism, were flung from one to another with a prodigality which nothing could exhaust. Millière, who was a colleague of Rochefort in the representation of Paris, called the aristocratic demagogue, in a letter to the *Vengeur*, "a capering monkey" and "a parading mountebank." Several members of the extreme party refused to sit with other members of the faction in the representation of the same place; and in every direction was heard the noise of personal disputation, rising in loudness and virulence even above the clamour of contending principles.

In the meanwhile, the division between Paris and the provinces grew wider every day. The triumph of the extreme Republicans in the capital was completely neutralised by their utter discomfiture in the country. It was feared by the demagogues of Paris that the provinces were really going at length to assert their own political freedom, and to decline any longer to be the bond-slaves of any set of adventurers on the banks of the Seine. Such a design was regarded as nothing short of high treason against the divine right of Red Republicanism; and the adventurers denounced it in terms of the hottest indignation. "There was once a time," said the *Rappel*, with a kind of despairing sarcasm, "when Paris considered itself the first city in France, which gave the law to all others; but the Prussians have made it prisoner, and the decentralisers profit by it. They will have their revenge: they have had enough of obeying; it is their turn to command. Paris may talk, but they will vote, and will finish once for all with the tyranny of that insolent town, which is the capital no one knows why. There will no longer be a city which governs the others, and the body will realise its ideal of no longer having a head." There had been a good deal of talk about decentralisation; but, said the *Rappel*, "if by decentralisation you mean the decapitation of France, halt! Suppress Paris! Happily, this is more easily said than done. The first day that the representatives of Paris find themselves in a minority, they will resign their functions in the Chamber of Bordeaux, and Paris will repudiate all solidarity with it." Never was the principle of despotism so bluntly and nakedly expressed. M. Pyat—always more extreme than anybody else—called upon the Parisians, in the *Vengeur*, to rise in insurrection, and declare themselves an independent Republic, rather than be dictated to from Bordeaux. Paris would have dictated to the whole of France; but the imposition on Paris of the will of a majority of the nation was not to be borne. Certain Parisian agitators had determined for the third time to set up a Republic; and, although by far the greater number of Frenchmen disapproved of that form of government, they must perforce accept it, under pain of Paris detaching herself from the rest of the country, like the Southern States of America in 1861.

It must not be supposed, however, that the Re-

publicans had the whole even of Paris to themselves. The middle-classes were for the most part monarchical, though, until cheered by the triumph of their views in the provinces, they had not the courage to say so. By the middle of February they began to declare themselves—some with timidity and caution, others more boldly. The Paris correspondent of the *Times* asked a librarian who had expressed strong monarchical opinions, and had openly condemned the Republic, how he could venture to do so in Paris. His answer was that he had fought side by side with the battalions of the National Guard from the Belleville quarter, and had seen how ready they were to run away. "They are arrant cowards," he said, "whom we know we can beat if it comes to fighting; they are no longer the men of '92." The same correspondent heard a discussion in a political club to much the same effect. At this meeting, "a speaker, dwelling upon the political cowardice which made his countrymen go like sheep in a direction they secretly detested, urged upon them the necessity of greater courage in expressing their sentiments in their choice of a form of Government. 'Are you a Monarchist or a Republican?' shouted a man in the audience. This was rather too sudden an application of his own preaching to suit the speaker, who seemed embarrassed for a moment, and then said, amid loud laughter, 'On this point I must be permitted to follow the example of my audience, and remain silent.' It was evident that he was a Monarchist, and afraid as yet to say so; but, finding the meeting by no means hostile to reactionary views, he took advantage of their apparent sympathy, and went so far in denouncing the Republic that another man took courage, and with some boldness denounced it as unfit for the country in its present condition, illustrating his position by the character of the local elections, and by the fact that political exile was a far stronger qualification in the eyes of the Republican than any talent. He alluded with gratification to the election of the Duke d'Aumale and Prince de Joinville, and denied that Paris could be considered in any way to represent even the large towns of France." The existence of this feeling was doubtless much more general than might have been supposed. The Republic is always established in Paris by a surprise; and the return of so many extreme politicians in the recent elections was rather to be attributed to the defective organisation of the moderate party, and to civic cowardice, than to the existence of an actual majority in favour of the Red Republic.

As February wore on, Paris gradually resumed much of its wonted aspect. The first appearance of sullen gloom and smouldering anger disappeared with the arrival of food from the provinces and abroad, and in a little while something of the old gaiety, self-esteem, and confidence returned. People said that after all Paris had not been conquered by the Prussians; it had only been vanquished by hunger: a statement not without a certain degree of truth, though subject to the important qualification that it was the Prussians who produced the hunger. France was going to prepare herself for a renewal of the fight at no distant day, and in a few years' time her soldiers would be in Berlin. For the present, there was life to be enjoyed, and the future must take care of itself. It is true that a large proportion of the Parisian populace was in mourning, and that hardly a woman was to be seen who did not wear black. But the theatres were again open and well-attended; and the old animation returned to the streets; and Paris once more danced and gesticulated as of yore, and tried to believe herself the queen and oracle of the world. The men were never tired of admiring their own heroism, and the women swore they would educate their children in the religion of undying hatred of Prussia, to take effect as soon as the Republic had regenerated the nation, and trained society to a practical faith in the brotherhood of peoples.

It was under this condition of things as regards the metropolis that M. Thiers entered on the task of government at Bordeaux. On Sunday, the 19th of February, the newly-appointed head of the Executive read a speech in the Assembly, stating that, although he felt frightened at the painful duty imposed on him, he nevertheless accepted it with obedience, devotion, and love—sentiments of which France stood all the more in need as she was now more unfortunate than at any other period of her history. The country, however, was still great, young, rich, and full of resources, and would always remain a lasting monument of human energy. M. Thiers then announced that he had formed his Administration, and that, in selecting its members, he had been guided solely by the public esteem they enjoyed, and their character and capacities. The list was as follows:—

M. Dufaure	Minister of Justice.
M. Jules Favre	Foreign Affairs.
M. Picard	Interior.
M. Jules Simon	Public Instruction.
M. Lambrecht	Commerce.
General Le Flô	War.
Admiral Pothuan	Marine.
M. de Larcy	Public Works.

Some difficulty was experienced in finding a suitable person who would accept the post of Minister of Finance; but at length M. Pouyer-Quertier was appointed to the office. M. Thiers did not himself undertake any special Ministerial portfolio, in order that he might have the more time to devote himself to the general affairs of the country. This was a very reasonable arrangement, for France was in a state which required constant watching, apart from the drudgery of departmental details. M. Thiers, moreover, doubtless desired to accustom Frenchmen to regard him in the light of an elected President of the Republic. Proceeding to explain the general principles by which he would be guided, M. Thiers said that he did not lay down any programme. A programme was always a vague thing, and there was then only one line of policy to follow. The evils afflicting the country must be put an end to, and they must terminate the occupation by the enemy. France had need of peace, which must be courageously discussed, and only accepted if honourable. M. Thiers also announced the reconstitution of the Councils-General, and of the Municipalities, by fresh elections. The Government would devote all its powers to pacify and reconstruct the country, to revive credit, and reorganise labour. Nothing was more pressing than that task. "I cannot imagine," he continued, "that any one can occupy himself with the Constitutional question while France is debating in the grasp of the enemy. Such is our policy. Every man of sense, be he a Monarchist or a Republican, can work usefully for the interest of the country, so that it may say to us under what form of government it desires to exist; and then, with the full knowledge of its wants, we can decide our destiny, and that not merely by a majority, but by the national will. Such is the policy to which my colleagues and myself devote ourselves. To give your assistance to a policy whose only objects are the interests of the country, will be to confer the strongest power upon your negotiators." This speech was followed by some supplementary statements by M. Jules Favre, who said that, as the Government had deemed it necessary to unite Parliamentary powers with those of the Executive, it proposed to the Assembly to facilitate the negotiations by the appointment of a Committee of fifteen deputies to proceed at once to Paris, where they would be in constant communication with the negotiators. The latter would be empowered to negotiate in the name of the country, and the Commission would be informed of the negotiations, and would subsequently report thereon to the Assembly, which they would not in any way pledge beforehand, their office being only that of an intermediary body between the negotiators and the national representatives at Bordeaux. M. Thiers, M. Jules Favre, and M. Picard, left for the north the same evening, in order to open the negotiations for peace with Count Bismarck at Versailles.

A reminiscence of the days of battles, of sieges, and of capitulations, which already seemed far away, was contained in the *Official Journal* of February 17th, which announced that Belfort—the fortress in the east of France which Bourbaki had made his desperate effort to relieve—had surrendered to the enemy on the previous day. The Provisional Government of Paris received, on the 7th of February, a telegram from Staff Captain Chatel, at Basle, which, under date February 6th, stated that, the rumour of the capitulation of Paris, and of the armistice, having penetrated into Belfort, the Governor of that fortress had sent him (Captain Chatel) to Basle, to ascertain the real state of affairs, and to obtain the orders of the Minister of War. Up to the 5th, said this communication, the enemy had not obtained possession of any of the advanced works of Belfort; but since the 26th of January—the day on which the Prussians attempted an assault on Les Perches—the besiegers had commenced, and actively carried, works of approach against the defences. A renewed attack was imminent, and the Governor did not expect to be able to repulse it. Sooner or later, the enemy would be master of Les Perches, and would then be in a position to command the castle, and attack in rear the forts of Barres and Bellevue. The fire of the Prussians was described as very formidable, from the size as well as the number of the projectiles. The fortress could only reply feebly with solid shot and bombs, reserving the oblong shells for the day of the attack. The forts of the Château Just, of Miotte, and Barres had suffered very much; but the scarps and counter-scarps were being rapidly repaired, except at Les Barres, where one wall of the scarp had fallen in. Belfort, being well provided with food and ammunition, could resist for some time longer; but neither Captain Chatel nor his superior officer was hopeful of the result. "The Commandant," said Captain Chatel, "is determined to do his duty to the last; but he cannot fix the limit of resistance of which the place is capable, especially considering the impression that has been produced upon the garrison and the inhabitants by late events. If, under existing circumstances, the Government finds that further sacrifices would be useless, and that there is reason for giving up the place, the Commandant would desire that the Government itself should discuss the terms of the surrender, taking care to stipulate that, in con-

sideration of the elements of resistance still remaining, the papers and archives, especially those belonging to the artillery and the engineering Staff, should be removed, and that the garrison should be allowed to proceed, with arms and baggage, to the nearest part of the territory occupied by French troops." In consequence of this report, the Government asked of Prussia that the garrison of Belfort should be allowed to quit with the honours of war. These terms were accepted. The troops were authorised to march out with arms and baggage, taking with them their papers and archives. At the same time, the Prussian and French Staffs fixed lines of demarcation between the belligerent armies during the period of the armistice, which, by the fall of Belfort, was made to extend to the whole of France. "Undoubtedly," said the *Official Journal*, after relating these facts, "this solution inflicts upon us further grief, which is deeply felt by every one of us. At least, however, we have the consolation of having spared the valiant garrison of the fortress the fate to which the laws of war would have exposed it if it had been compelled to surrender a few days later, under the compulsion of an attack the result of which was certain." Belfort had maintained a gallant and honourable fight, and its garrison fully deserved the honours accorded by the enemy. The general situation in the East of France at the period of the surrender of Belfort was that of two armies—the German and the Garibaldian—watching each other in expectation of a renewal of hostilities. Dijon was once more occupied by the enemy, and the French Army of the Vosges was échelonèd between Châlons, Mâcon, and Bourg, while the head-quarters of the first brigade were at the last-mentioned place with General Canzio.

Before proceeding to Versailles, M. Thiers and his colleagues visited Paris, and subsequently arrived at the Prussian head-quarters on the 21st of February. The momentous discussion then began. Humbled by excessive misfortune, France no longer disputed the principles of a surrender of territory and of a pecuniary indemnity; but M. Thiers struggled hard against the German demand of five milliards of francs—a sum equal to £200,000,000 sterling. Such a demand, it was argued, was without precedent in history, and the attempt to comply with it would derange the finances of the entire world. France had already paid a very large amount in the shape of requisitions, and Paris had only just handed over a war contribution of £8,000,000. Moreover, the country had to defray its own war-debt; and the interest of the loan that would be necessary for the finding of such sums would utterly crush the great body of the taxpayers, and make their position so intolerable as to lead them to prefer war at any risk to the continuance of such burdens. The French statesman advanced these arguments with as much force as he could command; but Count Bismarck was not to be mollified. He retorted that France had caused the expenditure, and must discharge it. He cleverly turned upon M. Thiers his recent words in the Assembly, that France was "still great, young, rich, and full of resources;" and he suggested that immense economies might be effected by cutting down the War Budget—one of those subtle touches of irony in which the German Chancellor abounds. Ultimately, M. Thiers was obliged to give way, and a still fiercer struggle then commenced on the nature and extent of the territorial sacrifice to be made by France. Alsace, including Strasburg, was at once relinquished; but M. Thiers and his fellow Ministers tried to the utmost to save Lorraine, with Metz. The great fortress of Eastern France, so long a tower of strength against Germany, could not be given up without an agony—without a series of efforts prompted by the energy of despair. M. Thiers employed his highest gifts of eloquence and persuasion to induce the German Chancellor to leave this famous city in the possession of the French. He promised to deprive it of its character as a fortress—to raze all the military works, and to give guarantees against their restoration; but Count Bismarck would listen to no compromise whatever. So determined was M. Thiers to fight to the very utmost for the retention of Metz, that, in the course of the 22nd of February, he sought an interview on the subject with the Emperor and the Imperial Prince, by whom, however—though he was received with great suavity—he was referred back to the inexorable Minister. The Count took his stand on the determination of the Germans to have Metz as a bulwark against France, and on the assumed necessity of guarding against any renewed invasion by the French people. He offered, however, to restore Belfort to France; and M. Thiers was at length compelled to yield the larger fortress, though he did so with a heavy heart, and doubtless with many misgivings.

Almost equally distressing, and perhaps even more humiliating, was the stipulation, on which Count Bismarck insisted, that, in the event of the signature of a treaty, a German corps should occupy Paris from the date of the expiration of the armistice to the ratification of peace by the Bordeaux Assembly. M. Thiers fought his hardest against this provision; and its discussion, according to the *Patrie*, occupied the negotiators ten times longer than all the other questions. The

same journal stated that on the first day M. Thiers obtained the concession that the Prussians should not be billeted on the inhabitants, but should lodge in the barracks. The second day he wrested the further concession that the Prussians should not lodge in the barracks, but should simply defile through streets occupied by German troops. At the last moment, he arranged with Count Bismarck that the Prussians should confine themselves to occupying the quarter of the Champs Elysées, as far as the Place de la Concorde. Some of these concessions, however, were not observed when the occupation took place.

The negotiations occupied six days—viz., from Tuesday the 21st to Sunday the 26th of February. In accordance with the convention of the 28th of January, the original armistice terminated on February 19th; but it was afterwards prolonged, first to the 24th, and then for two days more. Count Bismarck, in agreeing to the latter extension, intimated that no further time would be allowed, unless the preliminaries of peace were agreed to. Towards the close of the interview on the 26th, a stormy scene took place. The German Chancellor, who was not very well at the time, became impatient of delay, and insisted on the signature of the treaty, or the close of the discussion. In the latter event, he observed, war would begin to rage between the German troops and "whatever they could find to fight." It is said that throughout the whole discussion the Count was very arrogant and exacting—so much so that



THE MEAL INTERRUPTED.

M. Thiers, on several occasions, threatened to break off the negotiations and risk a renewal of the war, the odium of which, he warned the Prussian Minister, would be visited by Europe on Germany, however successful she might be in trampling out the life of an exhausted people. The French sovereign princes of Germany, in which he said:—"We are now at the end of a glorious but bloody war, which was forced upon us by frivolity without parallel, and in which your troops have taken so honourable a part. May the greatness of Germany be consolidated by peace!"



VICTIMS OF THE SIEGE.

Ministers, however, knew from the first that they had no alternative but to agree in the main to the demands of the conqueror; and accordingly, at six o'clock on the evening of Sunday, February 26th, 1871, the preliminaries of peace were signed. When this had been done, the Emperor sent for the Crown Prince. They embraced tenderly, and father and son both wept with joy. "With a heart filled with thankfulness," the Emperor at once sent a congratulatory circular despatch to the

The Commission of fifteen Deputies, sent to Versailles together with Messieurs Thiers, Favre, and Picard, could of course do nothing but ratify, as far as their powers went, the preliminaries agreed to by the three members of the Government. "With heavy hearts, and trusting only in the justice of God," said the *Journal des Débats*, in announcing the close of the negotiations on the morning of the 27th, "they submitted to dire necessity." The conquerors, observed the same paper, had cruelly

used their victory; and such was the sentiment very generally entertained throughout Europe. Great excitement prevailed in Paris during the 26th, and in the evening, owing to a false alarm of an attack by the enemy, the *rappel* was beaten, and the National Guards hastened to the ramparts. At the Marseilles Club it was decided to take possession of the cannon in the Place Royale, and to besiege the Hôtel de Ville, early the next day; but the scheme ended in words. On the following morning, when the terms of peace became known, the agitation was still greater. The city was described as in a state of frenzy. The streets were filled with armed men, and vengeance was vowed against the German Emperor, the Prussians, and all traitors. In the course of the evening, a battalion of Mobiles, unarmed, accompanied by a large crowd, went to the barracks of the Pépinière, and, in the absence of any interference on the part of the authorities, broke into the building, and released a number of sailors who had been confined there some days. The seamen were marched out in the midst of much cheering, waving of flags, and blowing of bugles, and were asked to assist in the removal of some cannon to a place of safety. Several pieces of artillery were dragged into new positions, and it was feared that a collision would ensue between the National Guards and the regulars. To allay this popular fever, the following proclamation, signed by M. Thiers and M. Picard, was posted up:—

"Inhabitants of Paris!—The Government appeals to your patriotism and wisdom. You have in your hands the fate of Paris. Upon you it depends to save or destroy France herself. After a heroic resistance, famine compelled us to give up the forts to the victorious enemy. The army which could have helped us was driven back beyond the Loire, and incontestable facts obliged the Government and the National Assembly to open negotiations. During six days the negotiators fought foot by foot, and did what was humanly possible to obtain the most favourable conditions; and they have now signed the preliminaries which will be submitted to the National Assembly. During the time necessary for the examination and discussion of these preliminaries, hostilities would have recommenced, and blood would have been uselessly shed had the armistice not been prolonged.

"This prolongation could only be obtained on the condition of a partial and very temporary occupation of a quarter of Paris. If the convention be not respected, the armistice will be broken, and the enemy, already master of the forts, will occupy in strong force the entire city. Private property, the works of art, and the public monuments are guaranteed to-day; but should the convention cease to be in force, misfortune will await the whole of France. The fearful ravages of war, which hitherto have not extended beyond the Loire, will then extend to the Pyrenees.

"It is absolutely true to say that the safety of Paris affects the whole of France. Do not imitate the fault of those who did not wish us to believe eight months ago that the war would be so fatal. The French army which defended Paris with so much courage will occupy the left of the Seine, and will ensure the loyal execution of the new armistice. The National Guard will undertake to maintain order in the rest of the city, as good and honoured citizens who have shown themselves to be brave in the face of the enemy; and this cruel situation will end in peace and the return of public prosperity."

A separate address to the people, signed only by M. Picard, as Minister of the Interior, was published in the *Official Journal* of the same day (the 27th). "In spite of every effort," said M. Picard, "it has not been possible to prevent the entrance of a part of the German army into certain quarters of Paris. The German negotiators proposed to abandon any entrance into Paris if the important fortress of Belfort were definitively surrendered. The reply was that, if Paris could be consoled in its suffering, it would be by the thought that this suffering procured for the country the restitution of one of its bulwarks, so often rendered illustrious by the resistance of its soldiers. We appeal, then, to the patriotism of the inhabitants of Paris to remain calm and united. Dignity in misfortune is at the same time honour, and the courage of those whom Fortune has betrayed ought also to be their hope of a better future." The conductors of the Parisian journals joined in imploring the populace not to complicate the situation still further by acts of violence committed against the Prussians; and by the 28th the agitation had to a great extent subsided.

During the progress of the negotiations the National Assembly stood adjourned. On the 27th, however, the deputies of the Extreme Left (the ultra-Republican party) held a meeting, at which an attempt was made to secure the adhesion of the Moderate Left to a protest against any peace based on a cession of territory. The attempt was a failure, the majority holding that all manifestations before the conditions of peace were known would be untimely. M. Gambetta desired to suspend the protest until the National Assembly was cognisant of the result of the negotiations, and expressed a hope that the whole party of the Left would then adopt the same line of conduct; but the members of the Moderate Left declined to enter into any formal engagement. A few days before, M. Jules Favre, in a letter to the members of the Provisional Government, endeavoured to console those Ministers

who did not form part of the new Cabinet by a suave expression of his esteem and regret. "I could have wished," he wrote, "that in the transformation that is going on we had remained on an equal footing in the service of the Republic, and it required an imperious necessity to make me consent to a change. Still, whatever may happen, we shall always remain united by a close friendship and a firm will to found a really free Government for our country." Notwithstanding these civil words, it was obvious to all men that the more extreme members of the late Government had entirely separated themselves from the more moderate.

Having concluded a new armistice of fifteen days, and done his utmost to tranquillise the capital, M. Thiers started from Paris on the night of the 27th, and arrived at Bordeaux at two P.M. on the 28th. The Assembly was immediately convened, and M. Thiers rose, in the midst of an impressive silence, to state officially the result of the negotiations. He commenced by saying that he and his colleagues had accepted a painful mission, and, after having used all possible endeavours, had come with regret to submit for approval a Bill for which they asked urgency. M. Thiers then began to read the Bill, which opened with the words:—"The National Assembly, forced by necessity, is not responsible, and adopts the Preliminaries of Peace signed at Versailles on the 26th of February." At this point, M. Thiers was so overcome by emotion that he was obliged to descend from the tribune, and leave the hall. The Preliminaries of Peace were accordingly read by M. Barthélémy St.-Hilaire, who next proceeded to read the document relating to the entry of 30,000 German troops into Paris, and said that the contracting parties had reserved the right to give notice for terminating the armistice after March 3rd, in which case a delay of three days must elapse before the resumption of hostilities. M. Tolain, one of the deputies for Paris, objected to the proposal to declare the discussion of the Treaty of Peace urgent, and denounced the conditions as too shameful to be accepted. This called up M. Thiers, who had by this time recovered his self-possession, and returned to the hall. He observed that, if there were anything shameful in the matter, the shame belonged to those whose votes had at all times contributed to bring about the ruin of France. Passionately and eloquently appealing to the patriotism of the Assembly, M. Thiers enlarged on the painful position in which the country was placed, and strongly supported the plea of urgency. Several of the Parisian deputies strove hard for delay; but M. Thiers replied, "We wish that everything should be known by you as it is by us, who are the victims of a state of things which we have not created, but must submit to. We entreat you not to lose a moment. I implore you to lose no time. By avoiding delay you may perhaps spare Paris a great grief. I have engaged my responsibility; my colleagues have engaged theirs; you must engage yours. There must be no abstention from voting. We must all take our share in the responsibility." Finally the views of the head of the Government prevailed, and it was agreed that the Committee should meet that evening at nine o'clock, and that a public sitting of the Assembly should be held on the ensuing day at noon.

The full text of the Preliminary Treaty of Peace was as follows:—

PRELIMINARIES OF PEACE.

"Between the Head of the Executive Power of the French Republic, M. Thiers, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, M. Jules Favre, representing France, on the one hand; and, on the other, the Chancellor of the German Empire, Count Otto von Bismarck Schönhausen, furnished with full powers from his Majesty the Emperor of Germany and King of Prussia; the Minister of State and of Foreign Affairs for his Majesty the King of Bavaria, M. Otto von Bray Steinburg; and the Minister of State, President of the Council of Ministers of his Royal Highness the Grand Duke of Baden, M. Jules Jolly, representing the German Empire; the full powers of the two contracting parties having been found to be in good and due form, what follows has been agreed upon to form the preliminary basis of a definitive peace to be hereafter concluded.

"ART. 1.

"France renounces, in favour of the German Empire, all her rights and titles over the territories situated to the east of the frontier hereinafter designated. The line of demarcation commences at the north-west frontier of the canton of Cattenom, towards the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg, follows towards the south the western frontiers of the canton of Cattenom and Thionville, by the canton of Briey, going along the western frontiers of the communes of Montois-la-Montagne and Roncourt, as well as the eastern frontiers of the communes of Marie-aux-Chênes, St. Ail, and Habouville; strikes the frontier of the canton of Gorze, which it traverses along the communal frontiers of Vionville, Bouxières, and Onville; follows the south-west and southern frontier of the arrondissement of Metz, and the western frontier of the arrondissement of Château-Salins as far as the commune of Pellencourt, enclosing its western and southern frontiers—to follow the crest of the mountains between the Seille and the Moncel as far as the frontier of the arrondissement of Saarbourg, to the south of Garde. The demarcation afterwards coincides with the frontier of that arrondissement as far as the commune of Tanconville, the frontier of which it strikes to the north. Thence it follows the

crest of the mountains between the sources of the Sarre-Blanche and the Vezouze as far as the frontier of the canton of Schirmeck; runs along the western frontier of that canton; embraces the communes of Saales, Bourg-Bruches, Cotroy-la-Roche, Plaine, Ranrupt, Saulxures, and St. Blaise-la-Roche, in the canton of Saales, and coincides with the western frontier of the departments of the Bas-Rhin and of the Haut-Rhin as far as the canton of Belfort, the southern frontier of which it quits not far from Tour-Advenans, to traverse the canton of Delle at the southern bounds of the communes of Bourogne and Froide-Fontaine, and to strike the Swiss frontier by passing along the southern borders of the communes of Joncherey and Delle. The German Empire will possess these territories in perpetuity, in all sovereignty and property. An international commission, composed of the representatives of the high contracting parties in equal number on each side, will be charged, immediately after the exchange of the ratifications of the present treaty, to carry out upon the territory the tracing of the new frontier conformably to the preceding stipulations. This commission will preside over the division of properties, funds, and capitals which hitherto have belonged in common to districts and communes separated by the new frontier. In case of disagreement with regard to the tracing of the line, and the steps to be taken, the members of the commission shall refer to their respective Governments. The frontier, such as it has now been fixed, is marked in green upon two duplicate copies of the map of the territory under the General Government of Alsace, published in Berlin in September, 1870, by the geographical and statistical division of the general staff, and of which a copy will be appended to each of the two copies of the present treaty. At the same time, the tracing indicated has undergone the following modifications, with the agreement of the two contracting parties:—In the former Department of the Moselle, the villages of Marie-aux-Chênes, near St. Privat-la-Montagne, and of Vionville, to the west of Rézonville, shall be ceded to Germany. On the other hand, the town and the fortifications of Belfort will remain to France, with a *rayon* which shall be subsequently determined.

"ART. 2.

"France shall pay to his Majesty the Emperor of Germany the sum of five milliards of francs. The payment of at least one milliard of francs will take place in the course of the year 1871, and that of all the remainder of the debt in a term of three years dating from the ratification of the present preliminaries.

"ART. 3.

"The evacuation of the French territories occupied by the German troops will commence after the ratification of the present treaty by the National Assembly sitting at Bordeaux. Immediately after this ratification, the German troops will quit the interior of the city of Paris, as well as the forts situated on the left bank of the Seine; and, in the briefest possible time, fixed by an understanding between the military authorities of the two countries, they will evacuate entirely the departments of the Calvados, of the Orne, of the Sarthe, of the Eure-et-Loir, of the Loir-et-Cher, of the Indre-et-Loire, and of the Yonne—and moreover the departments of the Seine Inférieure, of the Eure, of the Seine-et-Oise, of the Seine-et-Marne, of the Aube, and of the Côte d'Or as far as the left bank of the Seine. French troops will retire at the same time behind the Loire, which they will not be able to pass before the signature of the definitive treaty of peace. Are excepted from these dispositions the garrison of Paris, the number of which shall not exceed 40,000 men, and the garrisons indispensable to the security of the strong places. The evacuation by the German troops of the departments situated between the right bank of the Seine and the eastern frontier will be effected gradually, after the ratification of the treaty of peace, and the payment of the first half-milliard (20,000,000) of the contribution stipulated by Article 2, commencing with the departments nearest to Paris; and it will continue in proportion as the payment of the contribution shall be effected after the first payment of half a milliard. This evacuation will take place in the following departments:—The Somme, the Oise, and the parts of the departments of the Seine Inférieure, Seine-et-Oise, and Seine-et-Marne, situated on the right bank of the Seine, as well as the part of the department of the Seine and the forts situated on the right bank. After the payment of two milliards, the German occupation will only comprehend the departments of the Marne, the Ardennes, the Haut-Marne, the Meuse, the Vosges, the Meurthe, as well as the fortress of Belfort, with its territory, which will serve as a pledge for the three milliards remaining, and in which the number of the German troops shall not exceed 50,000 men. His Majesty the Emperor will be disposed to substitute for the territorial guarantee, consisting of a partial occupation of the French territory, a financial guarantee, if such is offered by the French Government, under conditions recognised as sufficient by his Majesty the Emperor and King for the interests of Germany. The three milliards, the payment of which shall have been deferred, will bear interest at 5 per cent., dating from the ratification of the present Convention.

"ART. 4.

"The German troops will abstain from making requisitions either in money or in kind. On the other hand, the subsistence of the German troops which will remain in France will be provided at the expense of the French Government under arrangements settled by an agreement with the German Military Intendance.

"ART. 5.

"The institutions of the inhabitants of the territories ceded by France, in all that concerns their commerce and their civil rights, shall be regulated as favourably as possible, when the definitive conditions of peace shall be determined. There will be fixed for this end a space of time during which they will enjoy special facilities for the circulation of their products.

The German Government will place no obstacle in the way of the free emigration of the inhabitants of the ceded territories, and will be able to take against them no proceeding affecting their persons or their properties.

"ART. 6.

"The prisoners of war who shall not have been already set at liberty by means of exchange will be given up on the ratification of the present preliminaries. In order to accelerate the transport of the French prisoners, the French Government will place at the disposal of the German authorities in the interior of the German territory a part of the rolling stock of its railways, as shall be determined by special arrangement, and at the price paid in France by the French Government for military transport.

"ART. 7.

"The opening of the negotiations for the definitive treaty of peace to be concluded on the bases of the present preliminaries will take place at Brussels immediately after the ratification of these last by the National Assembly and by his Majesty the Emperor of Germany.

"ART. 8.

"After the conclusion of the ratification of the treaty of peace, the administration of the departments which are still to remain occupied by the German troops will be transferred to the French authorities; but the latter shall be bound to conform themselves to the orders which the commanders of the German troops may think it their duty to give in the interests of the security, the maintenance, and the distribution of the troops in the occupied departments. The levying of the taxes after the ratification of the present treaty will be effected on account of the French Government, and by means of its *employés*.

"ART. 9.

"It is well understood that these presents cannot give to the German military authorities any right over portions of territory which they do not at present occupy.

"ART. 10.

"The present preliminaries shall be immediately submitted for the ratification of his Majesty the Emperor of Germany, and of the French National Assembly sitting at Bordeaux.

"In evidence of which, the undersigned have appended to the present Preliminary Treaty their signatures and seals.

"Done at Versailles, the 26th February, 1871.

(Signed) "A. THIERS.
"JULES FAVRE.
"VON BISMARCK.

"The Kingdoms of Bavaria and Würtemberg and the Grand Duchy of Baden, having taken part in the present war as allies of Prussia, and now forming part of the German Empire, the undersigned adhere to the present convention in the name of their respective sovereigns.

"Versailles, 26th February, 1871.

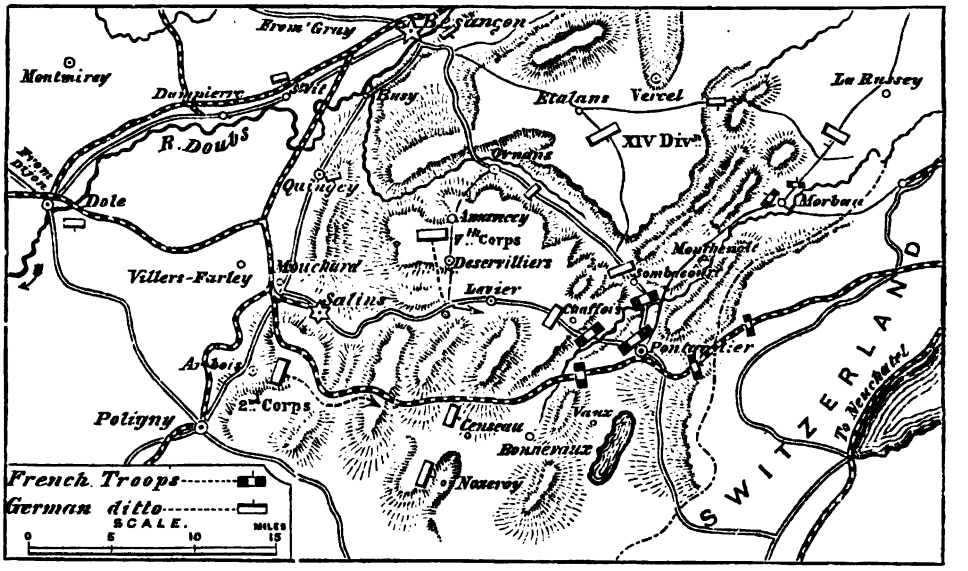
(Signed) "Count VON BRAY STEINBURG.
"Baron VON WERTHER.
"MITTNACHT.
"JOLLY."

This treaty—the effects of which on the condition of continental Europe were of the most important character—is said to have been ready prepared for a long time by the wary and politic German Chancellor. While the French were vainly struggling with their fate, Bismarck was quietly drawing up the act of humiliation to which he was resolved that they should set their hands. There is something in this quiet, secret, unswerving predetermination, backed as it is by an apparently resistless power of putting it in execution, which gives to modern Germany so tremendous and formidable a character.

The original sum demanded by Prussia as a money indemnity was six milliards (£240,000,000 in English currency)—an amount so enormous that the new French Ambassador at the British capital, the Duke de Broglie—who had been appointed on the recognition of the Republic by England immediately after the meeting of the National Assembly and the formation of a regular Government—represented to her Majesty's Ministers that it would be impossible for France to pay such a sum, and dishonest to enter into an engagement to do that which, it was well-known beforehand, the country had no means of doing. M. de Broglie therefore urged the English Government to represent to the German Government the impossibility of such a payment. Lord Granville accordingly wrote, on February 24th, to Lord Augustus Loftus, our Ambassador at Berlin, to convey through him to the Government of the Emperor the view taken by the French Ministers, backed to some extent, though cautiously, by the Cabinet of St. James's. The English Government confessed the difficulties which they felt to arise from their ignorance of the offers made on the side of France; and they bore in mind that this country was only one among the neutral Powers, all bound by obligations of friendship to both parties. Still, they were willing (Lord Granville stated) to make representations to Germany on the amount of the indemnity, and to tender their good offices in the spirit of friendship to both nations, under the conviction that it was the interest of Germany, as well as of France, that the amount of the indemnity should not be greater than what the latter could be reasonably expected to pay. This despatch was received by Lord

Augustus Loftus on the 27th of February, and by him communicated to the Prussian Minister, Baron Thiele. A copy of the despatch had already been sent to Versailles; and Mr. Odo Russell, writing on the 26th, informed Lord Granville that the war indemnity had been reduced to five milliards, and agreed to by M. Thiers.

In despatching the Duke de Broglie as French Ambassador to England, M. Jules Favre addressed a letter to Lord Granville, expressive of the desire of the French Government to renew with this country the relations of friendship which had so long constituted the mutual strength of the two



POSITIONS OF THE FRENCH ARMY OF THE EAST (BOURBAKI) AND THE GERMAN DITTO (MANTEUFFEL), 29TH JANUARY, 1871.

The Prussians occupied St. Vit and Dôle, and thus cut the line of the French retreat, driving them on Chaffois and Sombacourt, and, finally, on Pontarlier.

Powers, and contributed to the maintenance of peace in Europe. "I cannot conceal from your Excellency," pursued M. Favre, "that I should have been glad, in the days of our cruel trials, if this long-standing tradition had not appeared to be momentarily weakened; yet I do not forget the kindness your Excellency has shown me, for which I remain personally grateful to you, nor the regard which you have shown for France in postponing for her the labours of the Conference, in terms by which I am deeply touched. I venture to hope that the communications which the Duke de Broglie is instructed to make to your Excellency will confirm those sentiments, and may give rise to a course of effective action which I do not fear to solicit in the name of my country, believing it, moreover, to be in conformity alike with the interests and the feelings of the English people, calculated to be usefully subservient to their policy, and at the same time to lay the foundation of a peace which is desirable for the sake of all Europe." This, of course, had reference to the hope of France that England might be induced to interpose actively with a view to abating the rigour of the German demands generally. Our action, however, was limited to the suggestion, just described, that the money indemnity should be reduced, which, as we have seen, was not unsuccessful. On the occasion of the first interview between the Duke de Broglie and Lord Granville, the latter took exception to the expressions in the note of M. Jules Favre, referring to the feeling of disappointment in France at the non-intervention of England during the war. The English Minister observed that the Government had decided on neutrality as the line they felt bound to adopt in a struggle which they had vainly attempted to prevent; but that they had been actuated by the most friendly feeling compatible with the impartial duties of a neutral. The Duke replied that France felt our conduct to be cold; that there had been a disappointment as to our non-recognition of the Republic, and at our indifference whilst France was suffering so much; but that all questions of that nature were now resolved, and that he wished to talk only of the present and the future. The Duke, in short, perceived that the policy of England, whether right or



THE FIRST GERMAN IN PARIS.

wrong, had been directed by a deeply-felt national sentiment, with which it was vain to argue. The complaint as to our non-recognition of the Republic in its provisional stage was very natural under the circumstances; but it had no basis in reason. The Republic had not the slightest claim on other Powers until it had been shown that the French themselves recognised it. As soon as that had been sufficiently proved for the purposes of diplomacy, the European Governments made due recognition of its title, according to the custom now universally followed; and one of the earliest to perform this act was the Government of England.

CHAPTER XXI.

Effects of Peace—The Prospects of Europe—The Proposed Triumphal Entry into Paris—Boasting and Defiant Spirit of the Parisian Press—Preparations for the Entry—The First-comers (March 1st)—Review of German Troops at Longchamps—Reception of the Advanced Guard by the Parisians—Isolated Outrages—Arrival of the Main Body—Appearance of Paris—The Military Spectacle—Incidents of the Day—The Events of March 2nd—Visits of the German Soldiers to the Louvre and Invalides—Anger of the Parisian Population—Arrival in Paris of Large Bodies of German Troops—Tumults and Attacks on Individuals—Preparation for Departure—The Morning of March 3rd—Return March of the Occupying Forces—A Savage Parisian Mob—German Troops on the Race-ground of Longchamps—Address of the Emperor William to his Guards—Paris after the Departure of the Germans—The Teaching of the War.

THE die was cast. France knew her fate, and had now nothing more to do than to bear, with as much equanimity as she could command, the punishment allotted her for having failed in the ill-advised war of July, 1870. The Legislative Assembly, it was well-known beforehand, would ratify whatever terms M. Thiers might obtain from Count Bismarck. Peace, for the present, was assured—the peace of exhaustion, and of lowering but impotent hate. Europe could consider at leisure the relative positions into which France and Germany had been whirled by the current of events, and the probable effect of the vast military predominance of Prussia upon the general fortunes of the world. The prospect was not reassuring. Prussia made great protestations of a desire for peace; but it could not be forgotten that she had attacked and dismembered Denmark in 1864, that she had crushed Austria in 1866, and that she was at any rate well prepared and willing for the encounter of 1870–71. Neither could men put out of view the unquestionable facts that Prussia had made it a rule of her policy to re-acquire all territories occupied by a German race, and that some of those territories yet remained to be annexed; that even nations inclined to be pacific (which can hardly be said of the Prussians) are apt to be intoxicated by a sudden access of military glory; and that in this particular war the conquerors had not been conspicuous for self-abnegation or forbearance. The obliteration of France as a first-class Power left Continental Europe without any equipoise to the overwhelming strength of Germany, except such as might be offered by Russia, which, however, owing partially to the relationship between the two Emperors, was evidently disposed to support the projects of Berlin.* The terms of peace undoubtedly placed France at the mercy of Prussia. It was not merely that they protected Germany against French invasion: they enabled the Germans at any time to pour an army into the territory of their western neighbours, or to enforce their policy in any disputed matter by the threat of doing so. Unless France was utterly and finally crushed, it could not be hoped that such an arrangement would conduce to anything in the nature of a permanent peace.

For the present, however, nothing exasperated the Parisians so much as the stipulation with respect to the German army entering their city. It was in truth a cruel piece of vaunting over the prostrate and gasping capital; and there was something of the spirit of huckstering in the avowed readiness of the Prussians to forego the entry at the price of Belfort. The game had been won. The French were utterly beaten, worn-out, and dispirited. A peace had been provisionally concluded, which gave all the advantages to Germany; the military predominance of the Continent had

* Nevertheless, it was thought by some observers that the next great European collision would be between Russia and Germany. There were about 200,000 persons of Germanic race in the Baltic provinces of Russia. The Government of St. Petersburg, it was urged, would endeavour to Russianise these; the Germans were already murmuring, and might in time attempt to deliver their congeners from the galling oppression of the hated Muscovite.

passed from Paris to Berlin. Surely, under all these circumstances, it would have been magnanimous to forbear from triumphing over the fallen foe; surely it was a mistake to leave behind, without the slightest compensatory advantage, such a rankling memory—a memory much more likely to last, and to beget an intolerable desire of vengeance, than either the cession of territory or the payment of money indemnities; for men remember insults when they have forgotten losses. The German Emperor, however, was determined to take the utmost advantage of his success, and, having France in his power, to make her drink the bitter cup of adversity to the dregs. It was related that when Count Bismarck tried to persuade him to abandon the idea of a triumphal entry, he replied that it would be a disappointment to his soldiers not to be able to say that they had gone into Paris. The reason, if really given, was a ridiculous one; but it was likely enough to influence a successful warrior, glad of any opportunity for displaying his power and humbling his adversary. On the other hand, it must be admitted that the French did a good deal to draw the humiliation upon themselves. During the period of the armistice, many of the Parisian papers indulged in the most defiant language, almost challenging the Germans to come if they dared. A great deal of the usual blatant nonsense about the sacred soil of Paris, the capital of civilisation, the profane hordes of barbarians, &c., was poured forth. The *France*, of February 14th, said:—"The Prussians have no right to march through Paris; the Prussian has not taken Paris—it is famine. The Prussian army parading through Paris, before which it has militarily failed, will be a vexation which will dishonour Germany more in the eyes of Europe than it will humiliate France." Writers of this sort of declamation wilfully shut their eyes to the fact that Paris had in plain truth capitulated, though the painful result was disguised under the name of an armistice, to save the self-love of the citizens; that the forts, the guns, and the arms of the soldiers had been given up; and that the garrison were prisoners of war. It mattered not whether the city was taken by assault, or reduced by an investment; it was a military success, achieved by military science and generalship, in any case. Yet this miserable quibble was sufficient to satisfy the vanity of the Parisians, and to prompt them to a tone of defiance. The Prussian *Moniteur Officiel*, of Versailles, alluding to this state of things, remarked:—"On several occasions we have described as it deserved the arrogant tone in which the Parisian press insults the victorious army of Germany while under the walls of the city. We have also stated that the occupation of Paris by the German army would be the most efficacious means of putting an end to these effronteries, lies, and exaggerations. The rhodomontade and calumnies of certain journals now know no bounds. We learn that these unjustifiable proceedings have rendered the efforts to prevent the entry of the German troops into Paris completely fruitless, and their entry into the French capital has now become inevitable." In many other quarters it was repeated that the Parisian press had provoked the Germans into insisting on an entry; and the German press produced, with much satisfaction, an extract from the "History of the Consulate and the Empire," by M. Thiers, in which the writer described and justified the entry of the French into Berlin in 1806. Count Bismarck himself even addressed a rebuke to the French metropolitan journalists. "The tone of the Parisian press," he observed, "was in great part responsible for this war, and is now a serious obstacle to the conclusion of peace. It prevents the French nation recognising the necessity of peace, and produces the most prejudicial effect on the disposition of the German mind with regard to it." There was no doubt a great deal of truth in this; but, though it may have palliated the final resolve of Prussia in the matter, it did not amount to a justification. The Germans could well have afforded to disregard the idle rhodomontade of the Parisian writers; and it would have been at once the higher and the safer course to do so. The French will be just as ready to deny to all time that Paris was conquered by the Prussians, for all the vulgar triumph of an armed entry; and in the meanwhile there is a bitter memory to be avenged in blood, and tears, and rapine, if ever an opportunity should occur.

When it became known, beyond any further possibility of doubt, that the German troops would enter the city, the Parisian journals, being apprehensive of collisions, followed by still further exactions, universally counselled moderation and caution. They announced that they would cease to appear during the occupation of Paris, and advised the people to abstain from all demonstrations, except purely negative ones, such as hanging out mourning emblems. It was also suggested that the managers of the few theatres then open should close their establishments; that even the *cafés* on the Boulevards should refrain from opening; that the authorities should shut up the public Museums and galleries; and that the inhabitants generally should remain indoors, and keep their curtains drawn and shutters closed. The advice was good; but it was very hard for an emotional, sight-loving

people like the Parisians to keep it, and in fact it was not kept. The 1st of March was the day fixed for the humbling of haughty Paris; and, for a day or two before, the walls were placarded with inflammatory addresses from the more extreme Republicans. By the terms of the special convention, the limits of the German occupation of Paris were defined to be the Champs Elysées and the streets branching off therefrom—on the right towards the Seine, and on the left towards the Faubourg St. Honoré. Measures were taken to prevent these bounds being exceeded. A guard of troops of the Line was stationed at the end of every street leading into the Faubourg. The passage of the bridges, as far as the Pont de la Concorde, was barred by a double line of ammunition-wagons, at the entrance to and at the middle of each bridge; and strong guards were placed close by. The quay further on was also barricaded, and sentinels were posted across the entrances from the Place de la Concorde into the Rue de Rivoli and the Rue Royal. A cordon of soldiers was thus drawn round the entire quarter to be occupied by the invaders, and the bulk of the French troops were transferred to the opposite bank of the Seine, there to be kept until the strangers had departed.

From the date of the first armistice (the 28th of January), Paris had been at the mercy of the investing army. German guns were pointed towards its *enceinte;* and without the permission of German officers no one could pass in or out. Practically, the city had been taken for more than a month when the dreaded day of occupation arrived; but it would have been a solace to the already sorely punished Parisians if the last degradation of a military parade of the conquerors had been spared them. This, however, was not to be, and on the morning of the 1st of March the entry began. The earliest German soldiers to arrive were six troopers, led by a young officer (Lieutenant Bershardy, of the 14th Prussian Hussars), who, about eight o'clock A.M., rode through the Place de l'Étoile up to the Arch of Triumph, jumped their horses over the chains and other obstructions which barred the passage, and continued their route. These adventurous first-comers were soon joined by a squadron of cavalry, which composedly rode down the avenue of the Champs Elysées, escorting General von Kamecke and his Staff to the palace of Queen Christina of Spain, which was appointed for the general's head-quarters. At the same time, another detachment of soldiers took possession of the Palais de l'Industrie on behalf of the Bavarian troops, who were to be lodged there, while the Cirque Impérial was appropriated to the Prussian regiments. Sentries were then placed by the Germans opposite to those of the French at the ends of streets; various strategic points were occupied; guns were planted to command the avenues leading into Paris by the Arc de l'Étoile; and arrangements were made with the Mayors of the occupied districts for billeting the troops in various houses. In this way the morning and the earlier part of the afternoon were passed, and between two and three o'clock the main body of the troops marched in.

Previous to the entrance into Paris, the soldiers had been reviewed by the King on the racecourse at Longchamps—a place which had been utterly ruined by the French guns during the siege. The Grand Stand was shattered in numerous parts, and the neighbouring ground was covered with broken glass, heaps of rubbish, litters of straw, and the marks of camp-fires. The *Times* correspondent observes that the Prussian monarch "must have had some difficulty in recognising the place, which presented such a brilliant scene when, in 1867, he rode by the side of the now fallen Emperor, with the Czar, to review the Imperial Guard of France." The German troops were now drawn up in two lines—the first of infantry, in columns of battalion, the second of cavalry, in columns of squadron, with artillery on the flanks. In the rear of the cavalry were the baggage-wagons and ambulances. Each soldier was ordered to take with him into Paris three days' food complete, all requisitions having been forbidden. The Emperor arrived on the ground a little before eleven, and the review soon commenced.

"You may try to imagine the scene," wrote the *Times* correspondent. "There was only one thing wanting—sunshine—to make a German, at least, think it the most glorious sight in the world. Memorable the day will be to all time. To a less interested spectator it was a spectacle of grandeur and dignity, and the enthusiasm of those around one is always infectious. Men's eyes filled and flashed, and their lips trembled as they spoke of this 'historical day'—this 'colossal work;' but I declare there was nothing like wild delight or great outward exultation. One inspection is very like another. It is only the circumstances under which it is held that make the difference. When the King, preceded and followed by a wave of voices and the brazen clang of music, turned round the left flank of the line, the cavalry trumpets sounded a flourish, and then the distant voices of the famous Uhlans reached us. The Emperor-King returned to the right between the two lines, and galloped down to the ground a little to the right of the Grand Stand for the march past, which, in fact, began before he passed the cavalry, for there was no time to be lost, and so the infantry closed up to the right, and almost as soon as his Majesty was in his place the march began. It

was headed by his Imperial Highness Field-Marshal the Crown Prince of Prussia and Prince Imperial of Germany, Commander of the Third Army, by which Paris was invested, and to which it capitulated. . . . . The King never moved his eyes off the troops, except when he spoke to the Crown Prince and to the officers who joined his Staff as the regiments marched past. Count Bismarck, who had put on his helmet of steel with brass mountings, and wore his cuirassier boots, but not his cuirass, was in the crowd of officers a hundred yards away or more, and did not approach his Majesty during the march past. . . . . At twenty minutes past twelve, the drums and fifes of the 11th were heard over the crash of a terrible Bavarian brass band on white horses. The Staff of the 11th Army Corps was headed by its General, the gallant Von Bose, who was badly wounded at Wörth, and has only just come back to his old Corps. It is a famous Corps. The colours of the regiments are tattered to shreds. All the men are young and sturdy; and, if we laugh at the strut of the officers because it is novel to us, we cannot deny that it is full of spirit. Wittich's Division—the 22nd—has had plenty of fighting, and has borne it well; and such regiments as the 83rd, and the Jägers of the Corps, are not easily to be excelled in soldierly attributes. As the last battalion passed, and the cavalry came in view, I noticed that the Crown Prince had all of a sudden disappeared; but now he came up at the head of his own squadron, for he rode in front of the 8th Dragoons—an admirably horsed and well-appointed corps, which looks all the better for seven months' campaigning. This squadron was followed by the fifteen Dragoon detachments. Then came the end. It was a few minutes to one o'clock. The last man of the 30,000 had passed, and was moving across the racecourse, which now bristled with bayonets, for the streams were in full march for Paris."

The Emperor then received the congratulations of his son and of the Princes, and the proceedings of the day at Longchamps were over. His Majesty returned to Versailles, and the main body of the troops entered Paris.

While the small detachment of less than 2,000 men, who preceded the main body of about 30,000, were waiting for their comrades to join them, they were objects of great curiosity on the part of the Parisian rabble. The advice of the newspapers that the people should keep in-doors was not universally followed; but the persons in the streets during the morning belonged to the lowest classes of the population. They were moved to astonishment—sometimes not unmixed with a sort of enforced admiration—at the coolness with which the first few Germans rode into the city. When the young lieutenant in command asked the way to the Palais de l'Industrie, the street boys good-naturedly vied with one another in directing him, and then fell to admiring his horse, and comparing it with those of their own army, of which they did not give the most flattering account. The grown men were far less amiable. They scowled angrily at the Prussians; they kicked and beat a correspondent of the *Times* who had spoken to an officer of General Kamecke's Staff whom he knew; they savagely assaulted some of their own countrymen who had moved their ire by familiarity with the Germans; they fell with brutal ferocity on a lady for the same reason. The Germans, however, they did not dare to touch. These went about, searching for lodgings with a self-possession which might have been called bravado, but that the event showed it to be well-founded. Walking in twos and threes, they nevertheless seemed to be as safe as if they had been massed in large numbers. Sometimes a little mob of boys would follow, hooting, though more in sport than in earnest; but no one ventured to molest them. Occasionally even men and women formed around them in groups, and engaged in conversation; and the women openly expressed their admiration of the fine manly proportions, the martial look and gallant bearing, of the invaders. The Germans stacked their arms in the Champs Elysées, and quietly awaited the arrival of the main body. By the time the divisions from Longchamps had reached the outskirts of the city, the crowds in the streets had greatly increased. Those who in the earlier part of the day stood aloof, and glared at the strangers from a distance, gradually pressed nearer and nearer, and got into the main avenues to see the sight, humiliation though it was. The windows of the houses along the greater part of the route were carefully shut; the *cafés* were closed, and the allegorical statues of French cities round the Place de la Concorde were veiled with crape. But the vagabond part of Paris was out to see; and there were now some of the better classes as well. As the German regiments marched in, they were closely scanned, pointed at, hooted, or assailed with slang which they could not comprehend. One Frenchman, bolder than the rest, ventured to slap a German on the helmet. The soldiers made a pretence of preparing to fire, and the mob immediately fled in undisguised terror. During the latter part of the day, the people succeeded in preventing the Germans passing under the Arch of Triumph, by posting themselves there in great numbers, and refusing to move, so that the troops, in order to avoid a collision, were obliged to go round.

In the course of the afternoon, Count Bismarck was seen in the Place de la Concorde, looking on at the strange scene. The *Daily News* correspondent, in recording his observations of the day, said



GERMANS CROWNING THEMSELVES WITH LAUREL IN THE TUILERIES GARDENS.

he had striven exceedingly hard to think well of Paris in her tribulation, but that the aspect of the Champs Elysées was too much for him. There was a sort of gala look about the place, which was revolting under the circumstances. Ladies in dainty dresses and high-heeled boots tripped about, and on the representations of a messenger from the British Embassy, to which he had sent a note. The spectacle in the neighbourhood of the Arch of Triumph was very brilliant, considered as a military show. The Duke of Coburg, General Blumenthal, and their Staffs, rode in at the head of the troops,



A VISIT OF UHLANS.

Chevaliers of France, with ribbons in their button-holes, were not ashamed to stare at the ruin of their country. At this part of the route the windows were full; but the correspondent was especially disgusted with the conduct of the mob. Like one of the correspondents of the *Times*, this gentleman was savagely attacked for having spoken with the Crown Prince of Saxony and his aide-de-camp. After serious ill-usage, and threats of drowning in the Seine, he was dragged by the legs to the nearest police-station, from which he was released followed by a squadron of Bavarian Hussars, with pennons of blue and white silk, who were in their turn succeeded by two batteries of Bavarian Artillery, and then by Rifles and Infantry. "It was evident," said one of the *Times* correspondents, "that the Bavarians were to be allowed the honours of the day. There was the 'Leib Regiment,' with its shattered companies only a quarter of their original strength, and their flag hanging in ribbons from the stump of a broken staff—the regiment which has seen as hard fighting as any in the war, and which

I have seen go into battle eight times in eleven days. As they marched past the Arch of Triumph, the band struck up the 'Wacht am Rhein,' and the mob began to hiss and whistle. At the same time an officer's horse slipped and fell, and a crowd pressed round the dismounted rider. Instantly a comrade rode to his assistance; the crowd continued to hiss, and one man was ridden over, while two or three horsemen charged along the pavement. This had the effect of scattering the mob like chaff, and from that moment they looked on in profound and respectful silence." The stream of Bavarians continued, with slight intervals, for an hour and a half. Then came the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, with his heroes of Orleans, Beaugency, and Le Mans. Several distinguished generals were to be seen—among them, von der Tann, Prince Luitpold, Prince Adalbert of Prussia, and Prince Albrecht, of the Cavalry. The German Emperor and the Crown Prince, however, were not visible, and Count Bismarck was present for only a very short time. The first-comers were followed by Prussians; but these, instead of going straight down the Champs Elysées, turned into side avenues in search of quarters.

March 2nd passed off quietly. The Parisians had by this time made up their minds that the occupation of their city was an unavoidable evil, and, on the whole, they bore it with tolerable equanimity. Some of the householders on whom bodies of soldiers had been quartered bewailed the hardship of their lot; but there was no help for it; and necessity is as much the mother of patience as of invention. The Germans behaved with a fair degree of consideration, and went their ways with the solid gravity of their race. The Champs Elysées were turned into a huge camp, and in the Palace of Industry, as well as in the adjacent public buildings, alien soldiers bivouacked, and the sound of alien tongues was heard. A large force of artillery was drawn up at this part of the town, together with every variety of campaigning equipage. The Place de la Concorde was strongly occupied. Bavarians, with piled arms, were stationed on one side of the gate leading into the Tuileries Gardens, and a body of Prussians on the other. An English observer, writing in the *Guardian*, described the former as a very shabby, dirty-looking lot, who did not seem to offer the material of good soldiers, though they had in fact done some of the hardest fighting of the campaign; while the Prussians were evidently men of the finest stamina and the most perfect discipline. The same correspondent said that the German troops "were seated all round the outer balustrades of the place, on the basins of the fountains, and along the side of the river. I heard singing in the latter direction, and, going towards it, I was treated to a really magnificent chorus, sung, as all Germans seem to sing, by instinct, of the 'Wacht am Rhein' (the 'Watch by the Rhine'). The strain was taken up again and again, until it extended far along the quays to the west. The men seemed to have given themselves rendezvous there on purpose. But what a sight to see, and what sounds to hear! A victorious German army chanting triumphantly the 'Wacht am Rhein' on the banks of the Seine!" The Parisian loungers were of course doubly incensed by these demonstrations, and many were the lowering looks cast at the strangers. The walls were everywhere covered with placards, exhorting the people to refrain from violence, but breathing threats of future vengeance, recommending the country to regard the peace only as a short truce, and accusing all public men of treason, treachery, and cowardice. The placards had been largely annotated in pencil by chance readers, who added their own declamation to what they found in type. The German soldiers read these fiery ejaculations with smiles of contempt, and even many of the French belonging to the better orders expressed their displeasure at such undignified utterances, which were doubtless to be attributed to the heroes of Belleville and of the other revolutionary quarters, who were even then dragging cannon about (at a safe distance), and defying the Prussians to attack them.

The gates of the Tuileries gardens were opened at eleven o'clock, the convention having stipulated that unarmed companies, attended by their officers, should be allowed to visit the Louvre and the Invalides. The sight of foreign soldiers within this enclosure roused the Parisians to the utmost wrath. Yells and hisses burst out, and for a little while it looked as if a serious disturbance would ensue. But the Germans were speedily got out of sight, and the gates were closed on all fresh arrivals. General Kamecke remonstrated with the authorities for their breach of agreement, and demanded that every man who applied should be admitted. He afterwards, however, consented to forego this right, and gave up his own intended visit to the Invalides and the Louvre when he found that there would be danger in enforcing it. The Germans were certainly wise in not increasing the elements of danger on an unimportant issue, for they were extremely grave already. The correspondent of the *Guardian*, who furnished an admirable detailed account of the events of March 2nd, said that a very large additional body of German troops poured

into Paris on that day, although, according to the convention, the number was not to exceed 30,000, and at least that proportion, if not rather more, had entered on the previous afternoon. The numbers of the new comers, according to this authority, were prodigious. Cavalry and infantry belonging to all the various contingents of the German army were there, and a dazzling display of colours and uniforms filled the streets with animation. The troops went down the Avenue as far as the Place, and back again; and groups of brilliantly dressed and splendidly mounted officers rode to and fro, or sat contemplating the scene with looks of undisguised satisfaction. This departure from the strict terms of the convention was extremely reprehensible, and none the less so because, by good fortune, it happened not to result in bloodshed. That the stipulated number—30,000—was really exceeded to a very great extent seems certain, for, in addition to the authority already quoted, other newspaper correspondents were of the same opinion. The weather, as on the previous day, was bright, warm, and spring-like, and crowds of people were in the streets. A great many ladies were present; and when the German military bands played some lively airs, the spirits of the French seemed to revive, and the place had almost the aspect of a fashionable promenade. Everything went on quietly, though, in the course of the afternoon, some German soldiers, who had apparently been drinking, says the correspondent of the *Echo*, something stronger than water, marched by with laurel-wreaths on their helmets, and small branches of laurel stuck into the barrels of their muskets. Their bearing was described as unmistakably triumphant.

The Rue de la Paix, according to the *Times* correspondent, presented a strange aspect on the morning of March 2nd. All the shops remained closed, and both pavements were lined with little tricolor flags covered with crape. One side of the way was kept by the French Line and National Guards; on the other side were Prussians and Bavarians, criticising their late enemies in loud tones, or replying with laughter to their defiant glances. At the back of the French sentries was the crowd, looking on curiously, and overflowing with vituperation and sarcasm. At the barrier on the Quai, the French sentries happened to be remarkably little, insignificant men, and they presented a ridiculous contrast to the brawny, martial-looking Prussians who were pouring through. All these things contributed to the ill-humour of the mob; and the more decent part of the population dreaded a catastrophe at each succeeding moment. "Stories," said the *Times* correspondent, "reach us every hour of mob tumults, for the people, exasperated at the humiliating and impotent position in which they find themselves, wreak their vengeance upon any one upon whom, for some reason or other, popular suspicion falls. This morning, passing through the Place Vendôme, the National Guards rushed to their arms with as much precipitation as if the whole German army was upon them. The mob crowding the Rue Neuve des Petits Champs howled with excitement, and struggled to break past the line of sentries who were engaged in collaring a luckless individual, who might have been secured with a less number of men than a corporal's guard. This desperate character turned out to be a harmless individual who had somehow got into the way of the mob when they were dragging to the guard-room a German colonel and one of his officers, whom they had caught at the Orleans railway station, where they had arrived in plain clothes from Montargis, imagining that Paris was now open to them. The colonel's head had been severely cut; his companion was badly bruised; they had both had a narrow escape of their lives, and underwent a terrible mauling. Another German in plain clothes, not an officer, was being hustled on the Place de la Concorde, and was rescued and brought off in triumph by a single unarmed Landwehrman."

The day however wore on without any tragedy on a large scale, and towards six o'clock in the evening there were signs that the occupation was drawing to a close. It was officially announced early in the morning that the preliminaries of peace had, on the previous day, been ratified in the Bordeaux Assembly by a large majority, and that M. Jules Favre had gone to Versailles to demand the immediate evacuation of the capital, according to the third article of the convention. Had there been any delay in the ratification, the Germans would have prolonged their stay in Paris; and, indeed, it is said that the Emperor William counted on delay, and was excessively vexed when he found that, owing to the alacrity of the national representatives, he would be prevented entering the city in state on the 3rd, holding a grand review on the Place de la Concorde, and reviving his memories of 1814–15, when he served with the Allied Armies, which in those two successive years encamped on the banks of the Seine. Late in the evening of the 2nd, M. Jules Ferry, the Mayor of Paris, issued a notice to the effect that at early dawn next day the last of the German army would leave the city. Already many were departing. These appear to have been the additional troops, in excess of the

30,000, who came in during the day. The men who were billeted on the inhabitants remained for the night; but the signs of departure were obvious. Wagons, tumbrils, and other military equipages moved off towards the barriers, and Paris began to breathe more freely as the period of her great tribulation drew towards its close.

A thick fog ushered in the morning of the 3rd. This of course detracted from the splendour of the military spectacle in its earlier stages; yet the sight was very impressive throughout. At eight o'clock in the morning a tide of German soldiers poured beneath the Arch of Triumph, with a continuous roar of shouting, which rose and fell in sonorous modulations. The arch was now one of triumph to them, of sorrow and degradation to those who had built it as an eternal record of their own military predominance. Infantry, Cavalry, and Artillery filed through in long procession, the faces of the men illuminated by the proud gladness of the time; and as the head of each battalion came under the arch, the mounted officers leading it reined up their horses, glanced at the haughty structure above them, and gave the signal for a cheer. "In a second," said the *Times* correspondent, "every helmet was in the air; the horses, startled by the sudden roar, pranced and reared; their riders, carried away by the excitement, with heightened colour and flashing eyes, still waved their helmets, while the men strained their throats with their shouts of triumph. No matter, at that moment, upon which side one's sympathies might be, it was impossible not to catch the infection of the enthusiasm, not to feel one's heart beating and one's cheek flushing in harmony with the palpitating mass of men which went roaring and rolling past like some mighty torrent that had ever proved irresistible, and was still sweeping all before it. No wonder the groups of spectators looked stunned and awe-stricken. All along the Champs Elysées came regiment after regiment, with colours flying, swords and bayonets glancing in the sun; for the mist had by this time cleared away, and down the Avenue de la Grande Armée, far as the eye could reach, the glittering line extended—Generals with their Staff, Horse Artillery and Lancers with fluttering pennons, breaking here and there the line of march; the whole making the most gallant array that a soldier might wish to look upon." Only a few Frenchmen were present, and they did not venture on any counter-demonstration until the very end. At ten o'clock the procession came to a termination; and just as the cavalry pickets were beginning to close in from the rear, a carriage and one horse, containing three German officers in uniform, drove up from a side avenue. The mob, seeing that the officers were nearly cut off from their comrades, rushed upon the carriage, and tried to frighten the horse by yelling, hissing, and pelting it with dirt. The officers beckoned to the Dragoons in front to wait until they had come up; and in a few moments they were safe. Disappointed of their destined prey, the rabble then closed in upon the last pickets of Dragoons; but, on half a dozen of them facing about, the cowardly fellows fled in all directions. A French officer, seeing this conduct, remonstrated with the mob on the disgrace they were bringing on their country; but they paid little regard to him, and, when the Dragoons again turned, pelted them with the impotent spite that belongs to craven natures. At last, half a company of gendarmes formed in rear of the retreating Germans, so as to keep off the street ruffians; and by eleven o'clock not a German soldier remained within the fortifications.

On quitting the city, the German columns marched by different roads into the heart of the Bois de Boulogne, where the infantry halted, piled arms, took off their knapsacks, and lay down to sleep, under the protection of a rearguard, pickets, and patrols, which were as strictly set and maintained as if the state of war were still in force. The corps were distributed so as to block all avenues from Paris, and persons unprovided with German passes were stopped on their way. A review of some of the troops who had occupied Paris took place on the race-course at Longchamps. The Emperor, the Crown Prince, and a large Staff of superior officers, were on the ground, and the troops, in the first instance, were drawn up in two lines, each line formed of battalions in close column. Great cheering greeted the appearance of his Majesty, and the bands played the National Anthem, the music of which is the same as that of our "God save the Queen." From line, the battalions broke into column, and marched past in quick time. First came the Infantry of the Guard; and—to quote the language of a Military Correspondent of the *Times*—"as each regimental colour passed, just flung out from its staff by the light breeze, the man who, following his father's example, has steadily made and improved the German army—always patiently waiting for this moment, long delayed, but come at last—raised his hand, and saluted the Imperial ensigns carried by those who had won him his purple. An officer remarked, 'The King'—he is King still to all Prussians—'knows perfectly well how to manage a parade. The Crown Prince does not. He does not love war.'" The infantry were succeeded by

the Jagers, and they by the "Scutzen" battalion, a body of riflemen belonging to the corps of Prussian Guards. Then came the Pioneers and Engineers, and then the Landwehr of the Guard—men corresponding in some respects to our Militia, but always at the disposal of the Prussian Government for fighting the battles of their country abroad. These citizen soldiers—industrious workers in their own land, husbands for the most part, and the fathers of families—produced a great impression by their stalwart forms and steady marching. The Landwehr were followed by the "Leib Regiment," the Prussian King's Own, who in turn gave place to the cavalry, represented by detachments of Cuirassiers, Uhlans, Dragoons, and Hussars, who were not very well mounted; to the field artillery of the Guard, who were also poorly horsed; and to the siege artillery, brought there in small numbers as a compliment to that branch of the service. The sum-total of the force reviewed was about 30,000. The proceedings consisted only of a rapid inspection and a march past in quick time. Each battalion, after passing the Emperor, went off to its quarters on the other side of the Seine, without cheering or any kind of demonstration. As for the Emperor, his thoughts must have been too deep for expression. He had humbled France; he had taken Paris; he had held a military triumph in the capital of his ancient foe; he had destroyed the second Napoleonic Empire; and he now found himself at the head of an invincible army, the undisputed arbiter of the destinies of Continental Europe. He and Count Bismarck had created the marvellous machine which had secured these successes—had created it against a powerful Parliamentary opposition, and at the expense of temporary popularity. Now that they had so brilliantly succeeded, there were no such popular men in all Prussia as the Emperor William and Count Bismarck.

Before the termination of the review, the Emperor addressed the troops as follows:—

"Gentlemen,—You will understand with what feelings I have to-day once more seen the Corps of Guards after it has fought with a heroic courage that has earned my warmest recognition, and which I feel compelled to express to you here. With grief I miss many brave men from your ranks; but such deeds and such results as you have achieved demand sacrifices. As I have ever expected from the Corps of Guards, it has this time afforded an example of bravery, sacrifice, and endurance; but throughout the whole army a spirit of emulation in its achievements has prevailed, which not only can rank with the bravest deeds in history, but also has led us to a termination which, by the honourable peace concluded yesterday, will for all ages live in history. Therefore, to my heroic army, and to you, gentlemen, my heartfelt thanks and warm recognition are due; but at the same time we must not forget that we owe our thanks to Providence, whose will it was that we should be the instruments to perform such great and world-renowned events. Farewell until we meet again in our native country!"

The Second Prussian Army Corps commenced its return march to Germany on the 4th of the month; during the next few days the German troops steadily evacuated the prescribed districts in the neighbourhood of Paris; and on the 7th the investing forces delivered up to the French authorities all the forts on the left bank of the Seine. Immediately after the departure of the German army from Paris on the morning of the 3rd, the *cafés* and shops were reopened, and the omnibuses recommenced running. A proclamation of the Minister of the Interior congratulated the people of the capital on their bearing during the occupation; and the newspapers, breaking the silence they had observed for two days, overflowed with comments on the Preliminary Treaty of Peace, of which the upshot was that the so-called peace was nothing better than a strangling of the conquered by the conquerors. The citizens, however, became bright and buoyant the moment they were relieved from the presence of the hated foreigner. They filled the streets and public places with gossiping crowds, and at night the city was more brilliant with gas than it had been since the siege commenced.

The Military Correspondent of the *Times*, following out the train of reflections suggested to him by the review at Longchamps, remarked:—"If any doubt could remain in the minds of those who have followed the late war in person, or in thought, whether the German successes were due to a combination of fortuitous circumstances, or to actual superiority of race for warlike purposes, a comparison between the German and French troops in Paris must have decided the question. One had only to ride from Versailles, by Sèvres, into the heart of Paris, on the 2nd, with one's eyes open. Good-natured giants stood sentinel at the gates, lounged along the banks of the Seine, or played with French children in the streets. They needed no assertion of superiority; it was shown in every look and gesture, not offensively, but carelessly and naturally. They seemed, and were, ready to obey any order, whether it were to sack the Tuileries, or, as actually happened, to resign the right of entering the Invalides. Within the French lines there was nothing but talk of spies and betrayal. Women were stripped naked in the streets for speaking to

Prussians; men were mobbed and roughly handled because their hat or the cut of their coat was not French. One official exclaimed in wrath to people who dragged an inoffensive Englishman before him, 'Is there, then, no Government in France, that such as you take the law into your hands?' Just so—no Government. No strong clear head to command, no faithful hearts to obey. Part of the Army of the war against a tremendous enemy without making the smallest preparation for success, or even for decent failure; by the jealousy and disunion which created hostile camps in the same nation; by the inveterate love of talk and theatrical pretence; by intellectual degeneracy and physical collapse. Much has been said about the national sins of the French; and no doubt this may be urged with



PRUSSIAN FORAGING PARTY.

Loire has to be sent to keep the peace of Paris; and while men talk of being in Berlin within five years from now, there is great danger lest the whole fabric of society should fall into ruins." The justice of these comments was proved by the whole course of the war, and was about to be confirmed by the terrible series of events now on the eve of beginning. The Germans had won by the combined qualities of bodily and mental strength; by knowing exactly what they wanted, and how to attain it; by paying a proper regard to union and authority; and by not wasting their powers in idle declamation. The French had lost by the frivolity which declared perfect justice, especially if we have regard rather to Paris and the other great cities than to the country at large. But it may be questioned whether any nation is so virtuous as to be entitled to cast the first stone at them. After all, it is beside the question. France was ruined, not because there were profligates in her towns, but because there were divisions and incapacity in her counsels, and in the national character itself a want of wisdom, and even of ordinary sense, absolutely astounding. Folly, winged and rendered active by a certain natural wit and cleverness, is the terrible and fatal curse which Providence lays upon nations it has



THE KING'S PALACE, BERLIN.

designed to overthrow. Rather, perhaps, we ought to say that it is the one invincible and triumphant evil by which nations that have resolved on their own ruin contrive to baffle all the gifts of Providence whereby they might be saved. Against fools, said a terrible old Greek proverb, even the gods are powerless. We might speak in the same Pagan style, and aver that the gods will forgive anything sooner than foolishness. From the beginning of the war to the end, the French were incapable of learning wisdom, and they paid the penalty in desperate shipwreck.

But let us not fall into the vulgar mistake of identifying success with every form of goodness, or of holding it to be sufficient for its own justification in every aspect it presents. The conquerors in this miserable war were victorious by virtue of their having fully mastered the conditions of success; but on moral grounds they were open to many heavy impeachments. Insatiable greed and arrogant self-assertion were the mainsprings of their conduct. Remorseless in the struggle itself, they were without a touch of magnanimity when the fight was over, and their enemy lay gasping and fainting at their feet. If the French lacked sense, the Germans lacked humanity; and, although this may matter little from a worldly point of view, it may matter much from a higher. From many a burnt French village, from many a desolated French town, from many a shattered French dwelling, from many a French domestic circle where the father or the son was now missing for ever, slain not in the ordinary ways of war, but by so-called judicial sentences for acts of presumed opposition to the invaders, went up a cry for justice which no success can stifle, and no lapse of time can silence. The world entered on a darker and more pitiless period from the date of the Franco-German war. The policy of blood and iron received the consecration of its first great triumph, and Europe set her face sternly towards the future she had been taught to dread.

CHAPTER XXII.

Renewed Debate on the Preliminaries of Peace—Verbal Attack on the Emperor Napoleon—A Corsican's Defence of his Master—Furious Tumult—Motion for the Deposition of the Emperor Napoleon and his Dynasty—Speech of M. Thiers—Doubtful Legality of the Deposition—Speeches of Victor Hugo, Louis Blanc, General Changarnier, and Others—Final Address of M. Thiers—Ratification of the Preliminary Treaty of Peace—Resignation and Departure of the Deputies from Alsace and German Lorraine—Interchange of Ratifications—Protest of the Emperor Napoleon against the Decree of Deposition—Arrival of the Emperor at Chislehurst—Peace Rejoicings at Berlin—Arrival of Count Bismarck at Frankfort—Progress of the Emperor William Homeward—His Arrival at Berlin—Festivities in the Prussian Capital—Return of the Armies—Honours to Bismarck and Moltke—Opening of the German Parliament—Speech of the Emperor—The First Step in the Political Life of United Germany.

ON the same day that saw the entry of the German troops into Paris (March 1st) the National Assembly at Bordeaux resumed its discussion of the Treaty of Peace, commenced the day before. The debate was opened by an address from M. Victor Lefranc, who ascended the tribune to make a report in the name of the Committee of Control which had accompanied the negotiators to Versailles. He dwelt with great emphasis on the fact that the occupation of Paris by the Prussians would continue as long as the Chamber delayed the ratification of the preliminaries. "Let none of you," he concluded, more especially addressing the members of the Left—that is to say, the ultra Republicans—"shelter yourselves behind a refusal to vote, which would be simply desertion of duty and fear of responsibility." The Assembly did not seem well inclined to listen to M. Lefranc: it saw that the ratification of peace was a necessity, and desired to get over the painful business as expeditiously as possible. Long speeches were discouraged, but great applause greeted the declaration of M. Bamberger (an Alsatian deputy), that one man alone should have signed the treaty, in order that his name might be eternally nailed to the pillory of history. That man was Napoleon III.

The expression of so violent an opinion led to a scene of tumult. M. Conti, formerly Chief of the Emperor's Cabinet, and a Corsican, protested against the observation; upon which the Left exclaimed, "To the tribune!" M. Conti, who is described as a thin, dark, grey-haired man, of very gentlemanly appearance, at once accepted the challenge, and ascended the tribune, which was temporarily vacated by M. Bamberger. "I have been provoked," said M. Conti, "to reiterate from the tribune the protest I made in my place. In this painful debate I did not expect passionate

recriminations against a past to which many of us belong." This just and dignified rebuke could hardly be heard for the uproar of discordant sounds which greeted it. The speaker, however, courageously held on, and reminded the Chamber that some of its members had taken the oath of fidelity to the Empire. At this, a storm of imprecations burst forth. The Red Republicans, with that furious intolerance of criticism which always distinguishes them, even beyond other Frenchmen, howled, stamped, and cursed, although M. Conti had simply followed out their own injunction in ascending the tribune. "Thief! assassin!" exclaimed the raging crew of demagogues. "To the galleys with him! To Toulon!" These cries were not altogether empty threats. Colonel Langlois, an officer who had been engaged in the siege of Paris, during which he was wounded, rushed towards the tribune with the evident intention of dragging the Imperial advocate out of it. Several deputies, however, interposed, and a personal struggle ensued. Langlois foamed with fury; and one of the members pressed his hand over his mouth to silence him. He was at length restrained and quieted, and M. Conti, who had all this while preserved his self-possession, and who stood with his arms folded, calmly contemplating the disturbance, proceeded with his speech; but the noise was so great that very little could be heard. Victor Hugo then left his place, ascended the stairs leading to the tribune, and exchanged a few words with M. Conti, which were also drowned by the constantly increasing clamour. During the tumult, M. Jules Simon, whose manner is usually calm and judicial, challenged Conti to defend "the author of all their catastrophes." The Corsican retorted that in no assembly had he ever witnessed such intolerance. Another Corsican member said that "Napoleon III. would never have signed a shameful treaty." "Who spoke? Who said that? His name?" cried a number of deputies. "Galloni d'Istria," replied the courageous Imperialist. M. Haentjens, taking up the cudgels on the same side, said, "Better to blame a Prussian sovereign than one who is a prisoner to our cruel enemies." M. Bethmont proposed to proclaim the deposition of the Empire and of the dynasty; and, after a time, M. Conti, in deference to a suggestion of M. Grévy, the President, that he had said enough, gave up any further attempt to speak. "With perfect coolness and calm," said the Bordeaux correspondent of the *Times*, "the ex-Emperor's secretary, who had the courage to rise and defend a fallen master and a lost cause, stepped down from the tribune, exchanged a few words in passing with Thiers and Dufaure, disregarded M. Cochery (who, darting out at him like a bull-terrier, said something probably not of an agreeable nature), and finally resumed his seat on one of the benches of the Right. All the dignity was on his side; his adversaries behaved like ill-conducted schoolboys." So great was the excitement caused by this incident that the President thought it advisable to suspend the sitting of the House. In about half an hour business recommenced, and another scene of agitation began.

A resolution, numerously signed, decreeing the expulsion of Napoleon III. and his dynasty, and declaring him responsible for the invasion, dismemberment, and ruin of France, was brought forward by M. Target, said to be a son-in-law of M. Buffet, who sat in the Ollivier Cabinet. The motion was received with acclamation from the House generally; but M. Conti, and another Corsican named Gavini, demanded leave to speak; and the latter got into the tribune, and protested, "with all the force of his soul," as he phrased it, against the resolution. The Assembly, however, would not hear him, and M. Gavini gave up the tribune to M. Thiers. The latter spoke with excitement, and frequently brought his fist down heavily on the cushioned board before him. He said he had hoped to propose a policy of conciliation and peace, and that all would understand his reserve with respect to the past; but that when that past, the cause of all their misfortunes, reared its head before the country, the Chamber resumed its rights. In saying this, he put out of view the very important fact that the observations of M. Conti and M. Gavini had been provoked by a gratuitous attack on the fallen monarch in whom they still had faith, and by a motion for his deposition, on which every member had a right to offer his opinion and counsel. He went on to say that the Imperial Princes asserted that they were not the authors of the war, but that it was France which would have it—a statement to which M. Thiers gave the lie direct. The Assembly, he added, would follow the wisest and most dignified course in closing the incident; but at the same time he declared his respect for the courage of the Buonapartists in acting as they had done. The vote of deposition was then taken by acclamation, only six members remaining in their seats. These six afterwards signified their dissent; but their words had no other effect than to satisfy their own conscience.

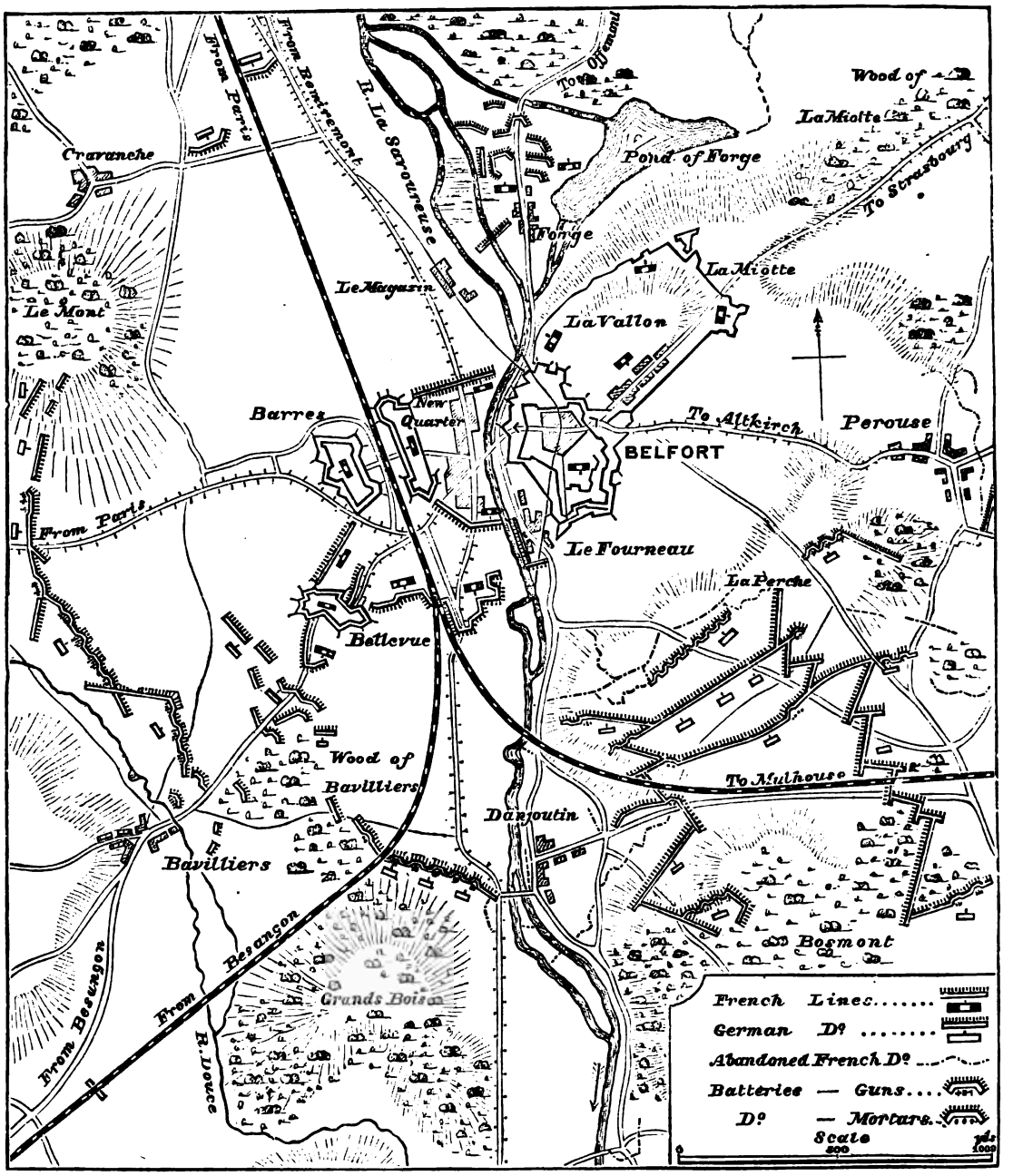
The deposition of Napoleon was a foregone conclusion, and it would be an abuse of language to say that it was even discussed. The vote took the form of a "confirmation" of the expulsion of the

Imperial family, which was in fact a recognition of the validity of what had been done in the Corps Législatif on the 4th of September, when a knot of Republican deputies, forming a very small minority of the House, voted the deposition of the Emperor during the absence of the President, which of course converted the meeting into a mere private assemblage. The gross illegality of that act cast a certain taint over what was now so needlessly connected with it; and, besides, there was very considerable doubt as to the competency of the National Assembly at Bordeaux to settle the Constitutional question at all. The Chamber was elected solely to determine whether or not the war should be continued, and to make whatever provision was immediately required for carrying on the affairs of the country. Its functions were scarcely less provisional than those of the Government constructed by General Trochu, M. Jules Favre, and their friends, out of the turmoil of a revolution, although, within the measure of its powers, it had a legal basis, which the other had not. How little the country thought that in sending members to Bordeaux it was empowering them to settle the form of Government permanently, is shown by a passage in a letter from the *Times* Paris correspondent, written at the period of the elections. This authority stated that some of the organs of public opinion, and many of the candidates, declared that the only object of the Assembly was to decide on the question of peace or war. "That once settled," the correspondent wrote, "the purpose for which it was convened is at an end, and new elections must be held. In the addresses of the candidates, many of them state that they consider their election to have no other scope but this, and that they do not demand the suffrages of the electors for a longer time than will enable the all-important point to be discussed and settled. A *bonâ fide* election, according to this view, cannot be held until the districts now occupied are denuded of the enemy, and France can vote without having to submit to the pressure and disgrace of the presence of the foe in her midst." There can be no question that this was the feeling of the country generally. The question of Empire or Republic was not before the constituencies; the members returned were charged with no authority to legislate on such a point. In settling the constitution of a country, the only modern ground of legitimacy, now that Divine Right monarchies and aristocratical compromises are alike exploded, lies in the direct appeal to the people. The Empire has always understood this principle; but the Republic never dared to subject its pretensions to such a risk. A more glaring usurpation than that of the Bordeaux Assembly it would be difficult to conceive. That the deposition of the Emperor might have been voted by a majority of the people, had the question been put to them, is very possible; but it is also possible that it might have been repudiated. The election of so many Orleanists does not *necessarily* prove more than that the Orleanist forces were better organised than any of the others, that there was a want of choice in the candidates, and that the country, staggered and bewildered by a great war and its disastrous consequences, chose the men whom it thought best fitted to conclude the peace which had become inevitable. The constitutional question, if present to the minds of any of the electors at all, was so confused and mixed up with a number of other questions demanding immediate settlement, that it cannot be said the nation pronounced any verdict whatever on the subject.

The deposition of the Empire having been pronounced, M. Victor Hugo rose and made a speech of unexampled silliness—or of silliness paralleled only by himself. For a lengthened period he poured forth a foaming cataract of tropes, similes, paradoxes, rhapsodies, boasts, and threats, such as the Assembly could hardly endure with common patience. With a great deal of uncouth and ridiculous action, he assured the House that Paris was the admiration of the world, and that it had not been taken by the Prussians; that Prussia did not "possess" Alsace, though she had seized it; that the France of the Revolution would be a red-hot iron to any foreign hand that tried to grasp it; that all which France had lost, the Revolution would regain; and that "one day the France of 1792 would arise invincible, and at a bound would recapture Alsace and Lorraine." As he uttered these words, the speaker (according to the *Times* correspondent) crouched into the attitude of a beast about to spring. Following out his vision of France recapturing Alsace and Lorraine, he continued, "Was that all? No; she would seize Trèves, Mayence, Cologne, Coblence—all the left bank of the Rhine." At this there were murmurs in the Chamber, and some deputies of the Left said, "We protest against the spirit of conquest." M. Hugo replied that he meant pacific conquests, and that he was looking forward to a time when France and Germany would be as one people, members of the great Republic of the United States of Europe. Of course this rhetorical flourish was an after-thought, to disguise the nakedness of a piratical scheme which the projector found had been received with less favour than he expected. After the literary

orator had finished, and another speaker had addressed the House, M. Louis Blanc ascended the tribune. This celebrated author and politician was as Republican in his opinions and as extreme in some of his views as M. Hugo; but he was generally distinguished by a greater amount of sense, of which, indeed, the other seemed to be almost totally devoid. He was a thinker and a reasoner—not simply a dreamer and a declaimer. Together with strong convictions, he retained a large measure of fairness; and, although a theorist, like most Frenchmen, he was not entirely wanting in practical notions on the necessities of the day. While lacking the lurid imagination and poetic afflatus of M. Hugo, he was infinitely his superior as a politician, and his speech on the question of peace or war was a great oratorical success, though but little can be said for the wisdom of the advice he proffered. The *Times* correspondent, summarising his arguments, said:—"He spoke with emotion of the siege of Paris, and of its heroic defence when placed face to face with the spectre of famine. He denounced Prussia as owing all her greatness to crimes, beginning by the robbery of Silesia and the partition of Poland, continuing by the dismemberment of Denmark, and now by the plunder of France. He protested against relinquishing provinces which were, he said, 'flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone,' and insisted that the war might and ought to be continued. The two-thirds of France not yet invaded contained a population of twenty-five millions; he was for adopting a new system of national defence, a guerilla warfare by small flying columns. The Chamber, which had repeatedly and loudly applauded him, did not relish these suggestions. 'We have for our refuge,' cried Louis Blanc, 'our mountains, the ocean, the Mediterranean, our fleet.' The majority of the Chamber would not stand this, and groaned and interrupted. A disagreeable task had to be performed, and most of the deputies evidently desired to get it over as quickly as possible, and had little patience for long speeches. M. Blanc must have perceived this, and probably abridged his discourse. After bringing in Joan of Arc, and advocating war to the knife, he returned to his place amid the applause of the Left." Louis Blanc was followed by General Changarnier, whose appearance of age and infirmity produced a great impression on the House. He earnestly advised the country to make peace, bade it beware of "the seductions of a dramatic patriotism, desirous of a false popularity," and urged it to reflect that, although France had at that time the respect of her adversaries and the sympathy of all other nations, she might lose both by the habit of boasting, which, under the best of circumstances, is odious to men of good taste. M. Emmanuel Arago, Minister of the Interior in the Provisional Government, spoke in favour of war, and so did M. Keller, an Alsatian deputy, who "appealed to the swords of all men of courage to rend as soon as possible the detestable treaty." M. Thiers, as the speaker concluded, said, "Give us the means." Another deputy replied, "The levy *en masse!* Let the 750 deputies put themselves at the head of France, and you will save France. Let all France rise!" The Assembly, however, received such wild language with scorn. It was said that at that very time there were no fewer than 900,000 Frenchmen under arms for the defence of the country; but the House knew too well by the experience of the last few months that only a very small proportion of these would be found capable of withstanding the Prussians.

M. Thiers ascended the tribune thrice during the debate, besides occasionally throwing in brief comments on the speeches of others. At times he was affected to tears, and several members shared in his emotion. In his last address he observed that the war had had two periods—before and after the 4th of September. He judged nobody, he condemned nobody; he was convinced that all had done their best. He had had nothing to do with either period. If the war had not succeeded, neither he nor his colleagues were in fault. When he had to negotiate, there had been the surrender of Sedan, Metz, Paris, and the dispersion of the armies which were to have relieved the capital. "I conducted the negotiations," he said, "with all the patriotism of which I was capable; I struggled with all my strength for whole days: I have been unable to do better than I have done. If you think it possible to obtain better conditions, send other negotiators; you will render me a great service; you will relieve me from an overwhelming burden. If you think you have the means to carry on the war, come here and expose them to us. Do not talk of honour before men who have as much as yourselves, but who make their honour consist in not risking the ruin of their country for the sake of a false popularity." He proceeded to say that he did not doubt the power of France, but her existing organisation. Her military organisation was broken; hence her weakness. He had cautioned the Government in July, 1870, that the army was not ready. The war was begun with infantry regiments of 1,300 or 1,400 men instead of 3,000; so that two regiments had to be sent instead of one, and with every regiment destroyed there was also destroyed at least twice the proper proportion of officers, non-commissioned



SIEGE OF BELFORT.

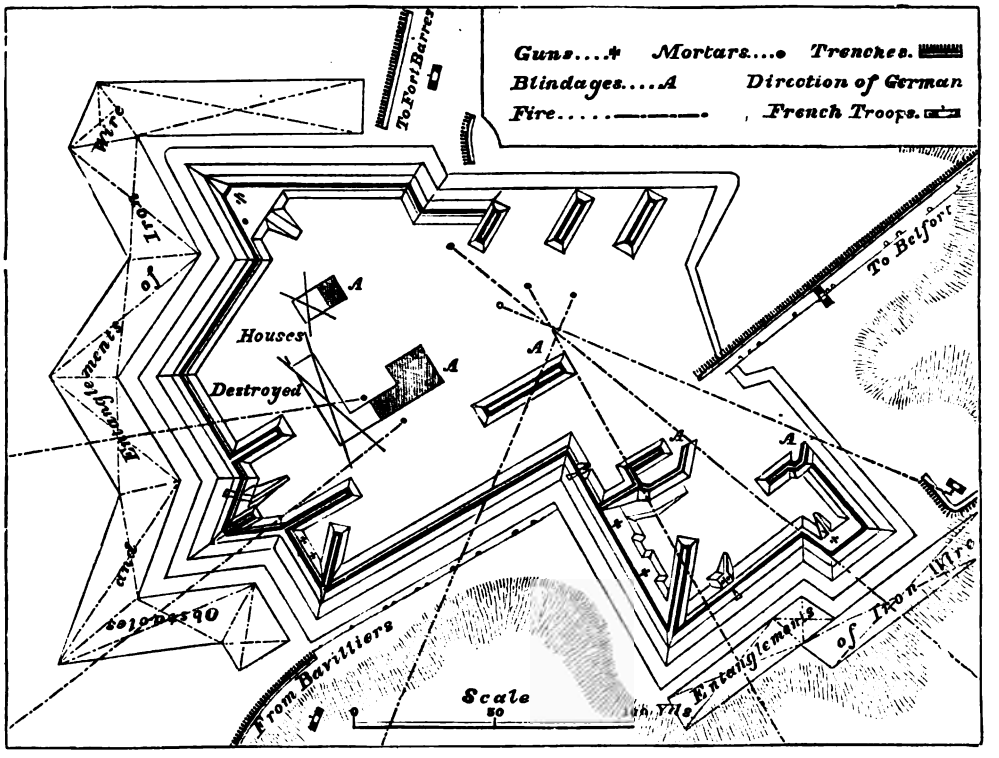
Showing the position of the German Lines at the termination of the Siege.

officers, and staff. The generals were obliged to make war with skeleton regiments, of which 116 were made prisoners at Sedan and Metz. "Afterwards," pursued M. Thiers, "you were obliged to continue the war without officers, with soldiers full of bravery—the enemy himself praised their valour in my presence; but soldiers without organisation or officers may be as brave as you please, yet they will never compose an army. Peasants, citizens, however courageous, if they are unacquainted with war, cannot be true soldiers. Brave and skilful men were General Faidherbe, General Chanzy, and General Bourbaki; yet what result did they obtain? It was not their fault. I do homage to all their talent and to all their energy."* Towards the close of his speech, M. Thiers exclaimed, address-

* *Times* Bordeaux correspondent.

ing his countrymen, "As long as you are a nation of declaimers, you will be nothing; you will only become something by respect for the truth." He exhorted the Assembly to seek the truth and to put faith in it, for that otherwise it was vain to build hopes on the future of France.

After a wild and excited address from M. Langlois, the ratification of the Preliminary Treaty of Peace was voted by 546 ayes to 107 noes. The number of abstentions (exclusive of those members who were absent on leave) was only twenty-three; but, M. de Trevenenc, a Breton gentleman. M. Rochefort replied, "You should have kept Alsace and Lorraine, and then you would have kept their representatives. It is you who delivered them up." "We fought for them," retorted M. de Trevenenc, "while *you* were getting up *émeutes*"—a perfectly truthful statement of the facts. The deputies from Alsace and the ceded portion of Lorraine then left their places, and walked slowly down the Chamber, shaking hands with several members, and followed by many mournful glances. On



THE BELLEVUE REDOUBT, BELFORT.

strange to say, Jules Favre was one of them. Among those who voted against the ratification was General Chanzy. As soon as the vote was taken, M. Grosjean read the protest of the twenty-seven deputies representing Alsace and German Lorraine, one of whom was M. Gambetta, who, on being elected for several departments, chose to sit for the Bas-Rhin. The protest concluded with the words: —"Your brethren of Alsace and Lorraine, separated at this moment from the common family, will preserve for France, absent from their hearths, a filial affection until the day when she shall return to take her place there." The deputies of the lost provinces then formally resigned their seats, and sadly turned to depart. "Why should not the representatives of Alsace remain among us?" asked reaching the threshold, they turned and bowed. The scene was very affecting; and to many it must have appeared like the visible departure of the conquered territory.

As soon as the ratifications of the treaty had been exchanged at Versailles, which was on the 2nd of March, the Emperor-King telegraphed to the Empress-Queen:—"I have just ratified the conclusion of peace, it having been accepted yesterday by the National Assembly at Bordeaux. Thus far is the great work complete, which by seven months' victorious battles has been achieved, thanks to the valour, devotion, and endurance of our incomparable army in all its parts, and the willing sacrifices of the whole Fatherland. The Lord of Hosts has everywhere visibly blessed our

enterprises, and therefore by His mercy has permitted this honourable peace to be achieved. To Him be the honour; to the army and the Fatherland I render thanks from a heart deeply moved." As soon as M. Favre received telegraphic intelligence of the ratification, he waited on Count Bismarck, and demanded the immediate evacuation of Paris. This was on the morning of the 2nd. The Count replied that telegrams announcing the ratification of the Treaty of Peace were not sufficient, but that the German troops would evacuate Paris when he had received the formal deed of ratification from Bordeaux, with the necessary signatures. At ten A.M. a special courier arrived from Bordeaux with the required deed. M. Jules Favre then returned to Versailles with the document, and again demanded the immediate withdrawal of the German troops from Paris. Count Bismarck accordingly wrote a despatch, at about two o'clock, to General Vinoy, requesting him to send French officers to the Elysée in order to come to an understanding in reference to the evacuation; and, as we have already seen, the unwelcome visitors departed on the morning of the 3rd.

The Emperor Napoleon was not inclined to let the decree of deposition pass without a protest against its justice and legality. He accordingly, on March 6th, addressed from Wilhelmshöhe the following document to the President of the National Assembly at Bordeaux:—

"Sir,—At the moment when every Frenchman, profoundly afflicted by the conditions of peace, was thinking only of the sufferings of the country, the National Assembly has pronounced the deposition of my dynasty, and affirmed that I alone was responsible for the public calamities.

"I protest against this unjust and illegal declaration.

"It is unjust, because, when the war was declared, national feeling, roused beyond measure by causes independent of my will, had produced a general and irresistible excitement. It is illegal, because the Assembly, appointed solely for the purpose of making peace, has exceeded its powers in settling questions beyond its competency. Even if it were a Constituent Assembly, it would be without power to substitute its own will for that of the nation. The example of the past is there to prove this. The hostility of the Constituent Assembly in 1848 fell to the ground before the election of the 10th of December; and in 1851 the people, by more than seven millions of suffrages, supported me against the Legislative Assembly.

"Political passion cannot prevail against right, and French public right; for the foundation of every legitimate Government is the Plebiscitum. Without that, there is only usurpation on the one side, oppression on the other. I am therefore ready to bow to the free expression of the national will, but to it alone.

"Amid mournful events which impose abnegation and disinterestedness upon all, I should have wished to maintain silence; but the declaration of the Assembly compels me to protest in the name of outraged truth, and the disregarded rights of the nation.—I am, &c.,

"NAPOLEON."

The Emperor, of course, did not expect to produce any immediate influence on the course of events in France by this protest; but it was necessary for him to take some notice of the action of the Assembly, lest he should seem tacitly to admit the justice of the sentence pronounced against him. He once said that everything is possible to the man who can wait. He now resolved to "wait" once more where he had waited in former years. On Sunday, the 19th of March, he left Wilhelmshöhe by special train, accompanied by General Montebello to the frontier, and escorted by two companies of the 83rd Regiment as a guard of honour. Travelling through Belgium, he arrived at Ostend, whence he came over to England by steamer, arriving at Dover a little before two in the afternoon of the 20th. The Empress and the Prince Imperial, Prince Murat and Prince Lucien Buonaparte, met his Majesty in the harbour, and the Emperor and Empress walked together to the Lord Warden Hotel, amidst the loud and hearty cheers of a large number of persons. After a short rest, they proceeded to Chislehurst, where there was another very friendly reception. The Emperor was looking well and cheerful; the Empress pale and careworn. What a world of tragic events for both had taken place between July, 1870, and that March day, 1871!

While Paris was mourning, Berlin was keeping high festival. The formal announcement of peace was made in the space before the Royal Palace at noon on the 3rd, when the Empress, the Crown Princess and children, Prince George of Prussia, and other illustrious personages, Field Marshal Count Wrangel, all the generals in Berlin, and numerous high officers of State, came out on to the balcony. The Emperor's telegram to the Empress having been read amidst cheers which drowned the final words, a military band, which had been placed near the monument of Frederick the Great, began to play the well-known chorale, "Nun danket alle Gotte," the people uncovering, and joining in the hymn. This was followed by various national airs, by the ringing of the church bells and the firing of cannon. Before the people had dispersed, the monster gun from Mont Valérien came down the Linden. It was received with cheers, again and again repeated, as, covered with flags and garlands, and dragged by sixteen horses, it slowly progressed

between the ranks of the people. At four o'clock in the afternoon, Divine service was performed in the churches, and many mournful and tender allusions were made to the hosts of brave and devoted men who would return to the Fatherland no more. At night, the city was brilliantly illuminated. Even the poorest houses put forth some species of light, and on the tower of the Town Hall red fires were flaming all night. The streets were filled with an orderly crowd; and at nine in the evening the Empress and the Princess drove out, and met with an enthusiastic reception. The celebration was as joyous as such celebrations can be; but it is their nature to carry with them a dark and heavy shadow. There must have been in Berlin that day many to whom the general congratulations were discordant, the lights garish and cruel, and who found in the aggrandisement even of their native Germany but poor compensation for what they had personally lost.

Similar festivities took place at Dresden, Munich, Hamburg, Leipsic, Frankfort, Weimar, Breslau, Cologne, and many other cities. On the 8th of March a ceremonial took place at Carlsruhe, on the arrival of the Grand Duke of Baden, whose wife was a daughter of the Emperor William. On the following day, Count Bismarck arrived at Frankfort. He seemed to be in high spirits, and was full of pleasantries. "The weather was extremely beautiful on the journey," said the Chancellor. "In France it was spring; the trees were mostly green; some, indeed, were in blossom; but in Metz the climate was quite German." Touching on politics, he said, "The German Emperor was necessary to us as the symbol of our unity. To him we must firmly hold; and if we hold together, we shall never be attacked again." On leaving the city, a wine-merchant said he wished that his Excellency could live fifty years longer, and would always take care of them; to which Bismarck replied that fifty years was somewhat too long, and that he should be quite contented with fifteen. "And then, I hope, Excellency," said the wine-merchant, "we shall have no more wars." "As long as we live," said Bismarck, "we shall certainly have none."

The Emperor (after a leisurely progress through France and some reviewings of troops) crossed the frontier, in his homeward journey, at Saarbruck, where the war began. Here he was presented with a laurel wreath of solid gold, together with an address extolling the fortitude of his Majesty, and severely criticising the French. The wreath was received by the Emperor in the name of the entire army. At Mayence, the reception given to the conqueror was of the most fervid description; and on the evening of the same day (March 15th) Frankfort was reached. The old Imperial city was illuminated, and the Emperor entered beneath triumphal arches, amidst salvoes of artillery and the ringing of bells. Flags—of which the greater number displayed the red, yellow, and black colours of the ancient Germanic Empire—waved from the windows; business was suspended; and the people were in the streets. His Majesty did not arrive until nearly seven in the evening, by which time the city was illuminated. The Emperor was accompanied by the Imperial Crown Prince, the Grand Duke of Hesse, the Minister of War (von Roon), the Chief of the Staff (Moltke), and a large number of distinguished officers. A procession of open equipages was formed, and at once drove to the palace of the Grand Duke of Hesse, where Prince Louis, the Princess Alice of England, and a distinguished party, were assembled. Later in the evening his Majesty drove through the city, and supped at the residence of the commandant, where an open-air concert was given.

The Emperor and the Imperial Prince left Frankfort on the morning of the 16th, and, having passed through several other German cities, in all of which their reception was of the most magnificent and hearty kind, arrived at Berlin during the afternoon of the 17th. They were accompanied by Prince Frederick Charles, Count Moltke, and the Head-quarters Staff. The Empress, the Grand-Duchess of Baden, the Princesses, and Prince William (son of the Imperial Prince), proceeded by rail as far as the Wildpark station, near Potsdam, to meet the Emperor. On the platform of the Berlin railway station were assembled the Dowager-Queen, the Grand Duke of Baden, the Princes Alexander and George, all the Ministers of State, and the general officers present in Berlin. The Emperor first saluted the Dowager-Queen; next his other relatives by embracing them; next Count Bismarck, Field-Marshal von Wrangel, and General von Roon. The scene at the railway station was vividly described by the *Daily News* correspondent, who wrote:—

"At the sound of a shrill distant whistle, out of the waiting-room stalks Count Bismarck in full war-paint; Wrangel doffs his plumed helmet; a stream of ladies and children follow Bismarck's stalwart form; in three minutes more a near rumble, and the train, bedizened with flags, rolls into the siding. Three carriages pass a flight of steps, and the fourth comes into sight; there rises a mighty cheer, and at the window stands the Emperor William, framed as in a picture. The old man's face is working as the cheers ring in his ears. He is down the steps and kissing the Dowager Queen

Elizabeth. What! will the women of his family mob him, then, as they crowd round him for his kisses, while grandchildren hang about his knees? No wonder that he has to brush his eyes with the back of his hand as he struggles through the women folk before him. In his path stands the white figure of Wrangel, the rays of the setting sun flashing on his snow-white hair. The soldier-patriarch raises his hand, and would fain lead off a cheer, but his voice fails him, and the tears roll down his face. His master, not less moved, kisses his servant on either cheek. The two old soldier comrades embrace; then the Emperor grasps Bismarck by the hand, and kisses him too. He serves von Steinmetz in the same manner. He kisses his way right through out of sight into the waiting-room, the Empress following him with a look of conscious ownership; and so exit Kaiser William.

"Behind him as he came from the carriage was a younger face, that of his eldest son. The Princess had fast hold of his left arm, and looked about proudly and gladly, the light of love in every feature. Her back hair had come down, and it streamed over her shoulders in beautiful confusion. Von Roon, Blumenthal, all the well-known Versailles faces, followed, and then the women burst into the reserved space, and hugged and kissed the Staff men who belonged to them as they came out of the carriages. The scene was like an April day—showers and sunshine, tears and smiles in about equal proportions. All state and ceremony went down before the gush of homely affection."

The Emperor proceeded in state from the railway terminus to the palace. The crowds in the streets were immense, and the acclamations enthusiastic and unceasing. After reaching the palace, his Majesty was compelled by the shouts of the people to appear in the balcony, helmet in hand, with the Empress on his arm, and finally at the window of the corner room where he showed himself on the declaration of war. The Imperial Crown Prince also repeatedly came to an open window of his palace, accompanied by the Princess and the children, the eldest of whom greatly delighted the populace by being dressed in the full costume of a Uhlan. At night the city was illuminated, and a banner floated from the pedestal of the statue of Frederick the Great opposite the Imperial Palace, on which banner was inscribed a long poem, beginning—"Hail, Kaiser Wilhelm! hail to thee and to the brave German host thou leadest back from victory, ghostlike, from afar. Like the clash of distant bells sounds the glad cheering of the conquerors. Old Fritz looks down with proud glance upon his descendants, approving greatly their valour." The palace of the Imperial Crown Princess was decorated with continuous chains of evergreens girding the columns, with evergreen chaplets under the windows, and a trophy of flags in front of the central portico. Other dwellings of distinguished persons were equally decked in the bravery common to these occasions, and busts of the Emperor and statues of Germania were frequent.

All this while, detachments of the German army in France were returning home, and meeting with a reception equal to that of the monarch; and portions of the French army imprisoned in Germany and in the neutral States were being gradually drafted off on their way back to the land which they had been unable to save from the invader, and which they would shortly be required to save from their own countrymen. The animosity existing between the two nationalities was shown in some serious riots at Zurich, in Switzerland, where the French attacked a party of Germans assembled at a festive gathering in honour of the peace. The disturbances continued for some days, and at one time looked grave; but the Federal Government called out troops and cannon, and restored tranquillity. Prince Frederick Charles was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the German army of occupation in France, with his head-quarters at Rheims. On the 22nd of March, Count Bismarck was raised by the Emperor to the rank of Prince, and Count Moltke received the Grand Cross of the Order of the Iron Cross. The opening of the German Reichstag or Parliament, on the 21st, was a ceremonial of a very imposing kind. After attending service in the Royal Chapel, the Emperor proceeded to the Legislative hall, where, in place of the usual throne of gold and crimson, a very ancient chair of stone, supported by four cannon-balls (brought, it is said, from Aix-la-Chapelle), was set up for his Majesty. When all was ready, Count Pückler, the Lord Chamberlain, entered, tapped the floor three times with his staff of office, and intimated the approach of the Emperor. His Majesty arrived at a quarter past one, followed by the Prince Imperial and the other Princes, with a staff of equerries, &c. As the Emperor came in, the former President of the Reichstag, Dr. Simson, called for three cheers for the sovereign. This was given with the utmost spirit; and the Emperor, who remained standing in front of the throne, helmet in hand, then received from the Federal Chancellor a copy of the speech he was to read, printed in large letters in a bound volume. It ran as follows:—

"Honoured Sirs,—When I see the German Reichstag assembled around me for the first time after the glorious but trying struggle which Germany has carried on victoriously for its independence, I am impelled, above all things, to give expression to my humble thanks towards God for the historic successes with which His mercy has blessed the faithful unity of the

German allies, and the heroism and discipline of our armies, as well as the devotion of the German people, which readily made all sacrifices. We have achieved what has been striven for by our forefathers—the unity of Germany and of its organic constitution, the security of our frontiers, and the independence of our national development of the laws. Although the conviction of its future unity was veiled, it was always vividly present to the mind of the German people. It has burst its veil by the enthusiasm with which the whole nation arose for the defence of the threatened Fatherland, and traced its will with indelible characters on the battle-fields of France, to be and to remain one united people. The spirit which animates the German people, and pervades its culture and morals, and in no less degree the constitution of its empire and its armies, guards Germany in the midst of its successes against every temptation to abuse the power gained by its unity. Germany willingly pays the respect claimed for its own independence to the independence of all other States and peoples, the weak as well as the powerful. Our new Germany, as it has gone forth from the fiery ordeal of the present war, will be a reliable guarantee of the peace of Europe, because Germany is sufficiently powerful and self-reliant to preserve the regulation of its own affairs as an exclusive, but at the same time sufficient and satisfactory, heritage. . . . . .

"The honourable task of the first German Reichstag will be to heal, as much as possible, the wounds inflicted by the war, and to confirm the thanks of the Fatherland to those who have paid for victory with their blood and their life. At the same time, you will, gentlemen, begin those works by which the representatives of the German people co-operate for the fulfilment of the mission which has been entrusted to them by the constitution for the protection of the laws of Germany, and for cultivating the welfare of the German people. The preparatory labours for the regular legislation have, I am sorry to say, suffered some delay and some interruption by the war. The Bills which will be submitted to you, therefore, directly originate in the new constitution of Germany. The constitutional arrangements made by the separate treaties of the 5th November last are to receive by a new Act a better conformation and a more harmonious rendering. The participation of the single Federal States in the current expenses of the Empire demands a legal settlement. Your co-operation will also be required for the introduction of the laws of the Confederation of the North which is intended by the Royal Bavarian Government. The disposal of the war indemnity to be paid by France will be effected, with your approval, in conformity with the requirements of the Empire, and with the just claims of the Confederate members. An account of the means for carrying on the war which have been voted by you will be laid before you as speedily as the circumstances will admit. The position of the territories recovered by Germany will render necessary a series of general laws, and also a law concerning the pensions of the officers and soldiers, and for the requisite measures in aid of the widows and orphans. These measures will apply to the whole German Empire in a similar manner, all the armies having fought for the Fatherland with the same devotion, and equally deserving the thanks of the nation.

"Gentlemen,—May the re-establishment of the German Empire, even after your time, be a promise of future greatness! May the German Imperial war, fought so gloriously by us, be followed by an equally glorious peace of the Empire; and may the task of the German people henceforth be to prove victorious in the universal struggle for the products of peace! God grant it!"

During the reading of this address, the voice of the Emperor faltered occasionally with emotion, and once broke altogether. But he speedily rallied, finished his speech amidst a great ovation, handed the book to an aide-de-camp, and, taking up his helmet, which he had temporarily set down, bowed and departed. Three cheers were then given, at the suggestion of the South German representatives in the Bund; and the ceremony concluded. The first step had been taken in the political life of united Germany.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Rise of a New Danger—Seizure of Cannon by the Red Republicans—A "Committee of Initiative" and its Designs—The Error of leaving their Arms to the National Guards—General d'Aurelles de Paladines and the Citizen Soldiers—Reasons for the Turbulence of the Latter—The Mobiles and the Regulars—Decrease of the Death-rate in Paris—Animosity against the Germans—Suppression of Revolutionary Papers—Similarity of all Governments in France—Red Flag and Tricolour—The Cannon and Entrenchments on Montmartre—Revival of Trade hindered by the Political Situation—Designs of the New Republican Organisation—Opinions of Blanqui and Others—Resignation by Victor Hugo of his Seat in the Assembly—Position of M. Thiers towards the Republic—Removal of the National Assembly to Versailles—Last Meeting at Bordeaux—Distrust felt by the Extreme Party—Speeches of M. Thiers in the National Assembly—Re-entry of the French into Versailles—A German Catalogue of German Successes—France preparing her own Ruin.

UTTERLY cast down, defeated, desolated, and brought to shame, France was now about to suffer a still more bitter fate at the hands of her own children. The Red Republicans had always been

a danger throughout the siege: now that the siege was over, they determined to prove the full extent of their powers. It was feared from the first that if the Provisional Government failed in defeating the invaders, the Parisian mob would turn upon the creature of its own forming, and do the utmost to rend it into atoms. Those fears were about to be realised. The Germans had beaten the Republic even worse than the Empire; Paris had been occupied for two days, and, like a wild beast maddened with pain, the proud, wilful, beautiful, flattered, and spoiled city struck its teeth into its own flesh in the fury of disappointment and of mortified vanity. The Belleville demagogues had no courage to attack the Germans during their stay in Paris, or only ventured on isolated outrages when the odds were a hundred to one; but they had sufficient faith in the weakness of their own Government to believe they might beard it with success. On the eve of the German entry they possessed themselves of several pieces of cannon standing in public places; and, having dragged these to the heights of Montmartre, La Villette, and Belleville—quarters of the city lying to the north and north-east—maintained throughout the 1st and 2nd of March a blustering attitude of defiance, which was ludicrous, considering that they took care to keep away from all possibility of a collision with the stranger. On the night of the 3rd, the disaffected National Guards made another demonstration, when thirty howitzers were seized on the ramparts, and carried off, together with their ammunition. That these seizures were made in pursuance of a settled design, and not in mere bravado, is sufficiently



THE EMPEROR ENTERING BERLIN.



HOISTING THE GERMAN STANDARD ON VALÉRIEN.

shown by a circular issued by a body calling itself a "Committee of Initiative," which circular, though issued privately, was discovered by the police. The document stated:—"A unique opportunity for the serious reorganisation of the citizen Militia presents itself. An excellent artillery, which the Prussians were about to obtain, has, owing to our vigilance, fallen into our hands. This artillery is the property of the National Guard, and has been paid for by our subscriptions; it will be for the future a power of which you will understand the importance. This artillery ought to remain ours, and not fall into the hands of any enemies, whoever they may be. It is a matter of interest, of dignity, and of honour, to the future of the National Guard." The circular then proceeded to request the officers of the National Guard of the arrondissement to collect their companies with a view to organising an insurrection. In that way would be formed a committee of battalions, whose first duty would be to collect men friendly to the cause. These were to perform regular artillery service, and to exercise with the guns placed on the heights of Montmartre. On the union of the battalions of the National Guard, the circular concluded by remarking, the future of the Republic would depend. The members of the committee were for the most part unknown men; but the existence of such a body should have placed the Government on its guard to a greater extent than appears to have been the case.

The Administration, however, was in some degree the victim of a gross error committed by the Government of the National Defence, which, during the negotiations for the armistice at the close of January, stipulated for the retention of their arms by the National Guards. The regular troops, the Mobiles, and the sailors were to give up their weapons to the Prussians, and the protection of the capital was to be confided to the citizen soldiers, who had shown themselves the least worthy to exercise such a power. This necessity of flattering the mob was the disastrous legacy which the Republican Government inherited from its origin. The National Guard doubtless included many honourable, patriotic, and orderly men; but the revolutionary element was strong in its ranks, and the Government, while it feared Belleville, was obliged to court it. These extreme Republicans had never been at all formidable to the enemy; they had proved the most faint-hearted and unreliable, as they were certainly the most braggart, of the Parisian forces; but the possession of arms and ammunition had enabled them to keep the Government in a state of perpetual terror, and had materially injured the defence of the city, on two or three occasions, by nearly paralysing the arm of authority. Led by such men as Gustave Flourens, Pyat, Blanqui, Millière, Delescluze, and others, the National Guards from the Red Republican quarters of Paris brought about the insurrectionary movements of October 31st and January 22nd; and they now contemplated a more serious attempt, for which they had provided themselves with more formidable weapons. The armistice convention gave the Government a golden opportunity for disarming these turbulent sectaries, and leaving the capital in the hands of trustworthy soldiers; but it was passed over, in order that the Administration might once more endeavour to curry favour with those who had already determined on its overthrow.

At the beginning of March there were but few troops in Paris on whom the Government could count for resisting the action of the disloyal. More were expected to arrive in a few days; but the demagogues were resolved to make the most of the position of command in which they found themselves, and to anticipate the action of the authorities by presenting a bold front. The orderly part of Paris placed great reliance on the energy of General Vinoy, an old Crimean officer of high character in every respect, who had succeeded Trochu in the chief command of the Army of Paris; but he had little power at his disposal wherewith to coerce the malcontents. Trochu had now no military command whatever, having retired into private life; but his conduct was so vacillating during his time of office, that his presence in Paris would have given little assurance of vigour in the crisis that was evidently approaching. The command of the National Guards of the Seine was conferred on General d'Aurelles de Paladines, who was commonly regarded as an Orleanist, but who now declared himself determined to defend the Republic, and not be made the accomplice of any coterie or party. In the address which he issued on assuming his command, he stated that it was his firm resolve to repress energetically every act likely to disturb the tranquillity of the city. On the 6th of March he received the Staff of the Commandant of the National Guard, by whom he was told that the citizen soldiery acted on the principle of appointing their own chiefs, and that they therefore protested against his nomination by the Government. This was in itself an ill-omened inauguration of the new rule, and the feeling of discontent was increased by a rumour that the real object of de Paladines' appointment was to effect a complete reconstruction of the force, preceded by a disbanding of the men. Those of the National Guards who came from the artisan and revolutionary

quarters of Paris were very jealous of anything which threatened their position as amateur soldiers. The pay they received from the State was sufficient to enable them to disregard their regular occupations, to idle about in a military uniform, to make frothy and grandiloquent speeches, and to menace the Government with a revolution about once a week. They habitually referred to themselves as the appointed guardians of the young Republic, as the only real supporters of the saving principles of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, and as the heroes destined to wreak a terrible revenge on Germany for her triumph. To do nothing all day but talk fiery patriotism and strut about with the air of conquerors, to glorify oneself and one another, and to have the means of keeping a whole city in constant dread of anarchy, are privileges which the dangerous classes of Paris have always valued too highly to relinquish without a struggle. The National Guards of the Red Republican faction therefore kept watch over their guns on the heights towards the north-east, and the Government was puzzled to know how it should deal with the new enemy which had sprung up in its face.

In this relative situation, day succeeded day, and still the disaffected National Guards maintained their position, while each side hesitated to attack the other. The alarm that was at first experienced began to diminish, especially as some of the cannon were given up by those who were tired of mounting guard over them. People soon came to think that the whole affair would end in a farce as ridiculous as that which extinguished the Irish rebellion of 1848, when, on the firing of a few shots, the heroic Mr. Smith O'Brien crawled out of danger under the kindly shelter of a cabbage-bed. But the event proved that these sanguine prophets were greatly mistaken. Paris was really on the eve of a tremendous struggle, and the inability to understand its peril was one of the circumstances which rendered that peril so extreme. The Mobiles, who might have been depended on for upholding the Government, were rapidly sent away to their homes in the country, and the regular troops by whom their places were supplied were much more likely than they to be affected by a sudden accession of the revolutionary sentiment. In the dreadful insurrection of June, 1848, no troops attacked the rebels with so much courage and persistency as the Mobile Guards, though many of them were almost boys. They were drawn from the peasant class, and had no sympathy with the socialist ideas of Paris, Lyons, and Marseilles. The soldiers of the regular army were of course largely recruited from the same order; but their entire separation from it, and their association with the large towns, tended to imbue them with feelings and opinions of a revolutionary character; and on many occasions the troops of the Line had shown how ready they were to make common cause with the heroes of the barricades. The demagogues on the present occasion appealed to this feeling in a large placard, addressing the soldiers as "sons of the people," and exhorting them to "save the Republic," to disobey orders, and to remember that conscience was above all discipline. The address was carried by acclamation at a public meeting on the 10th of March, and it stated:—

"Odious reports are being circulated in the provinces. There are within Paris 300,000 National Guards, and yet troops are being brought in, while efforts are made to mislead them as to the spirit of the inhabitants of Paris. The men who have organised defeat, who have dismembered France, who have handed over all our gold, seek to escape from the responsibility they have assumed by fomenting a civil war. They reckon upon your becoming docile instruments for the perpetration of the crime they are meditating. Citizen soldiers, will you obey the impious order to shed blood which is the same as that which flows in your veins? Will you tear out your own entrails? No, you will not consent to become parricides and fratricides. What is it that the people of Paris desire? They desire to retain their arms, to select their own chiefs, and to remove them when they have no longer confidence in them. They wish that the soldiers of the army should be sent to their homes to give their hearts to their families and their arms to labour. Soldiers, sons of the people, unite with us to save the Republic. Kings and Emperors have done us sufficient evil. Do not sully your lives. The word of command does not abolish the responsibility of conscience. Let us embrace in the face of those who, to gain a promotion, to obtain a place, or to bring back a King, would wish to have us cut each other's throats."

On the 11th of March General Vinoy had got 40,000 soldiers in Paris, whom he reviewed in the Champ de Mars, and addressed on the necessity of improved discipline, on the critical condition of Paris, and on the duties which that condition imposed on them. Yet still the Government shrank from the task of dealing sternly with the rioters who defied it.

One thing which contributed to raise the spirits of the Parisians at this time, notwithstanding the heavy shadows of the past and the future, was the returning health of the city. The number of deaths in the week ending Saturday, March 11th, was 2,993, showing a decrease of 507 as compared with the previous week, and of 1,700 with the first week of February. Business was reviving, and traffic and gas had returned to the streets. Thus cheered, the people began to take their revenge on the Germans in such ways as they found ready to their

hands. Anti-Prussian leagues were formed, both in Paris and the provinces. The journals adjured French merchants not again to employ German clerks, as they had formerly been much in the habit of doing, but to substitute young Alsatians who had chosen to abide by the fortunes of France. Some Germans attempted to open shops in Paris; but the people compelled them to put up their shutters at once, and the German wife of a French hatter was seriously maltreated by a mob, who wrote upon the shutters that a Prussian was waiting to be hung inside. Prussian workmen who before the war had been employed at various establishments were refused a re-engagement. One of the papers undertook to publish every day a list of all Germans who dared to enter Paris, and actually prepared forms which were to be filled up by spies. A M. Béhier presented to the Academy of Medicine a motion for the exclusion of all members belonging to the Confederation of the North; and it was received with general approbation. The Parisian actors agreed that they would never accept an engagement in Germany. M. Nadar, the photographer, announced that he would neither photograph nor employ a German. At Lyons a register was opened, in which people subscribed their names to a declaration that they would eternally hate the Prussians; and in various parts of France isolated attacks on the detested foreigners were so frequent that the German authorities threatened reprisals if they were not abated.



PRESENTATION OF A CROWN OF VICTORY TO THE EMPEROR.

While dallying with the danger at Montmartre

the Government ventured to take steps against some of the supporters of revolutionary projects. A Council of War, charged with inquiring into the disturbances brought about on several occasions by the extreme factions, gave certain judgments, by which Flourens, Blanqui, Levrault, and Cyrille were condemned to death, and others to various terms of imprisonment, while two of the rioters were acquitted. The excessive violence of the Red Republican journals at length provoked the Government to a necessary measure of repression; but, with their usual timidity, the Ministers shrank from taking the responsibility of this step upon themselves. They assumed that Paris was still in a state of siege, and therefore threw upon General Vinoy the task of suppressing the seditious papers, though the execution of the decree was entrusted to the civil authority. The decree was as follows :—

"The Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Paris, exercising during the state of siege the power necessary to maintain order, and the police, having consulted with the Government, and seeing that no free government is possible when every day public prints of wide circulation preach with impunity sedition and disobedience; that the Republic cannot be re-established, but in respect for the rights of all in order and in industry; that order and industry cannot be established so long as such publications are tolerated; that the journals undermentioned are incessant in direct provocation to insurrection and pillage, and that it is the duty of the Government, in the exceptional circumstances of the country, to use the rights which the state of siege gives—

"Decrees—1st. The publication of the journals *Le Vengeur*, *Le Cri du Peuple*, *Le Mot d'Ordre*, *Le Père Duchesne*, *La Caricature*, and *La Bouche de Fer*, is and remains suspended.

"2nd. The publication of all new journals and periodical prints treating of political matters, or of social economy, is interdicted until the state of siege is raised by the National Assembly.

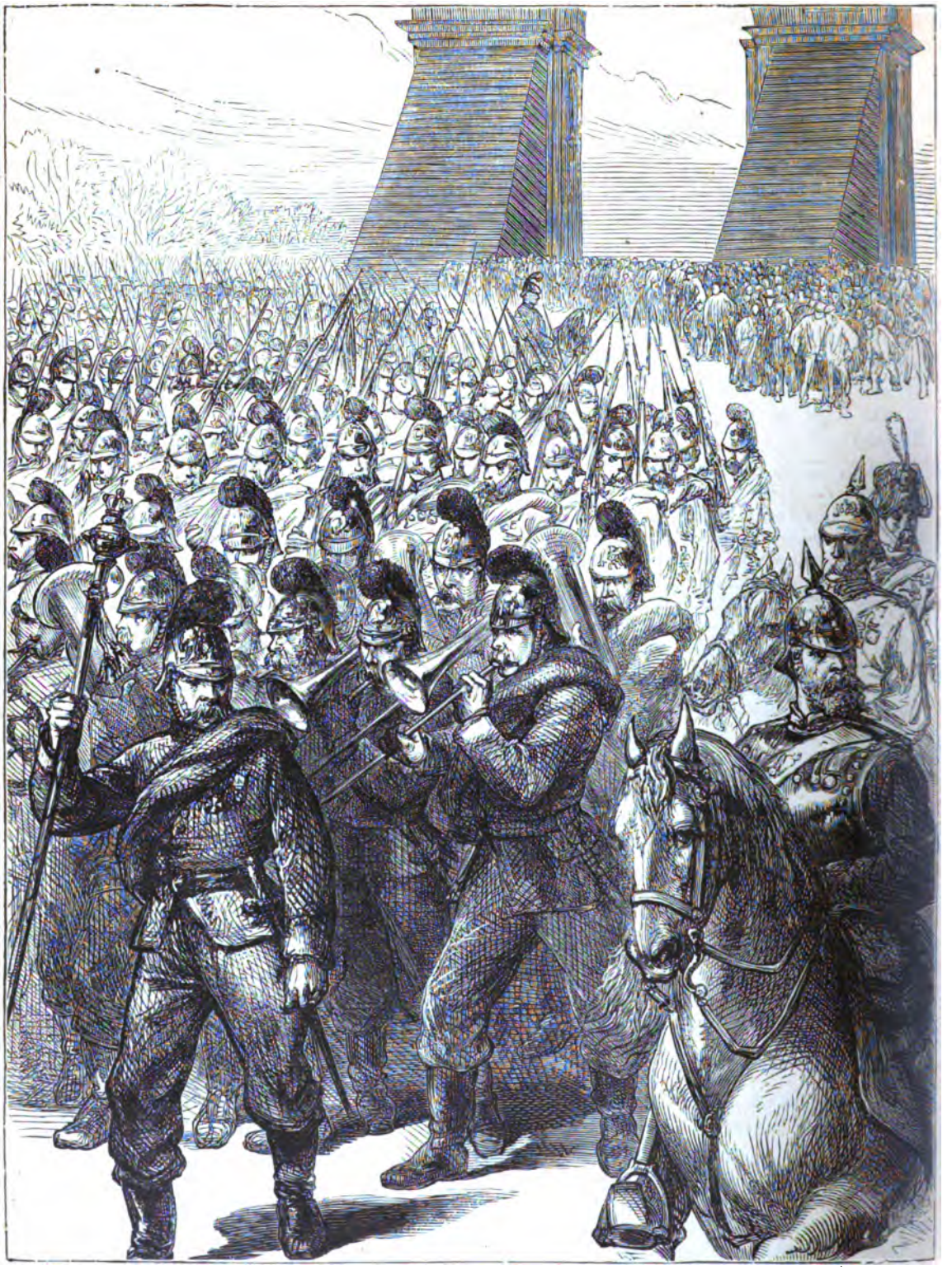
"3rd. The Prefect of Police is charged with the execution of this decree.

"The Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Paris, VINOY."

"Paris, March 11, 1871."

The Republic was thus soon brought to the conviction that the necessity under which the Empire confessedly lay, of being obliged from time to time to forbid the expression of opinion when it threatened the existing Government and the very bases of society, was shared equally by itself. It is interesting to observe how little the essential characteristics of governments are affected by changes in their form and designation. During the reign of Napoleon III., it was the habit both in France and England to speak of the suppression of newspapers by that ruler as a distinctive and peculiar result of Imperial institutions; as if precisely the same thing had not occurred under every form of Government which France has tried during the last eighty years. The fault is clearly that of the French people themselves, and the necessity is one which no Government in that country can escape, though partisan writers would have us fasten it solely on one system. Where there is a perpetual disposition to anarchy—where there is no sense of fairness, of moderation, or of mutual concession—every successive Government will be compelled to use the weapons of coercion, lest all be lost. In France, every party, whether Monarchical or Republican, is prone to govern by decrees and exceptional exercises of power; and that by a necessity which all inherit in their turn. All, too, write the same style, and vindicate the same acts by the same phrases. The Republic of 1871 was simply the Empire of 1852, without its strength, its popular support, its brilliance, and its prosperity.

It cannot be questioned that the course taken by the Government with reference to the interdicted journals had the sanction of public opinion generally. These papers abounded in the most infamous attacks on persons and on institutions. A writer in the *Times* described the *Cri du Peuple* and the *Bouche de Fer* as publishing articles so obscene and blasphemous that it was impossible to quote them. The conductors of the Red Republican journals seemed to take a malicious delight in shocking the feelings of the more decent classes of society. They omitted no opportunity of insulting, mocking, and burlesquing the opinions of others, and forbore to argue because it was more effective to revile. Their object was to work a complete revolution in the structure of society, and that not by effecting a gradual change in the convictions of the majority, but by armed attacks on the existing order of things—by a forcible and arbitrary imposition of the theories of a faction on the mass of the people. Direct incentives to civil war were published from day to day in these organs of sedition and bloodshed; and the Government had to choose between suppressing them and being itself suppressed. It is an abuse of language to call such acts of power a limitation of the freedom of discussion. They are rather the safeguards of all honest discussion when a nation has unhappily drifted into such a state as that which France—following many miserable precedents in her annals—had reached in March, 1871. There can be no real discussion in the midst of a clamour of insults, jibes, menaces, shrieks of defiance, and cries to



GERMAN TROOPS ENTERING PARIS.



THE GERMANS LEAVING PARIS.

arms. We in this country are free, and justly free, to criticise all systems of thought and all forms of government; but it is because we have hitherto, with but rare exceptions, respected each other's views, or at any rate refrained from inciting one section of society to draw the sword upon another. The French have never understood this golden rule of moderation and forbearance; and acts of repression have followed, as the necessary consequence of intemperate appeals.

The malcontents increased in audacity every day. They pillaged depôts of small arms, and threatened the orderly citizens with violence. They proposed to resist the entrance into Paris of certain regiments of the regular army which were suspected of Imperialism. They repudiated General d'Aurelles de Paladines as Commander-in-Chief of the National Guards. They took steps for the organisation of Provincial Committees for acting in conjunction with the Central Association of Paris. They attached a red flag to the statue of Mercury on the summit of the Column of July; and when some sailors endeavoured to replace the tricolour, a disturbance ensued, and the sailors were thrown into prison. One of the sailors excited the wrath of the people by touching the red flag in a way which they considered disrespectful. On being questioned, he replied that he was a sincere Republican, but that he preferred the tricolour to the ensign of the demagogues. "Under this flag," he said, pointing to the former, and regarding it with an affectionate look, "I have been five times round the world; but where has *that* thing"—glancing contemptuously at the red flag—"ever been to?" Lamartine said much the same thing in February, 1848. The condition of the city was so grave that a meeting of all the Mayors of Paris took place on the 6th of March at the Hôtel de Ville, and M. Jules Ferry talked of sending in his resignation as the Chief Mayor. Nothing could be more lamentable than the failure of authority in the capital—a state of things which encouraged the disaffected to assume a still bolder front, and to speak as if they alone represented the country. Félix Pyat, a little before the suppression of his journal, *Le Vengeur*, accused General Vinoy of menacing the peace of the city because he refused to recognise the supreme authority of the Central Committee of the National Guard; and it was said that the Government was exciting the population to revolt—most certainly a work of supererogation, had the charge been true. The aspect of affairs at Montmartre was most serious. The number of cannon planted there by the rebellious National Guards was no fewer than 417, while General Vinoy at that time had only four guns at his disposal. The position taken up by the Red Republicans was the strongest in Paris, and one which a body of determined men could hold for a long time against even a superior force. It had been further strengthened by the resources of military art. Two barricades, guarded by sentinels, defended the approaches to the Place St. Pierre. The guns, with their muzzles pointed towards the city, occupied the summit of the hill, and were placed behind well-constructed batteries, provided with épaulements, breastworks, and trenches. Of ammunition there was an abundant supply; pickets of sentinels occupied the corners of the streets; the squares and open spaces were regularly patrolled day and night, and the formation of groups was interdicted. The head-quarters of the insurgents were at Belleville, and thence all orders were issued to the various leaders. A correspondent of the *Times* said that, what with regular troops arriving from the provinces, and thousands of Mobiles going to them, and National Guards observing each other, the city was like a vast camp. When the officers and men in the neighbourhood of Montmartre were not otherwise engaged, they passed their time in playing games of chance with copper or silver coins, according as their means allowed. All seemed to be awaiting an attack by the Government troops; but it is difficult to understand why they did not at once take the initiative.

One ill effect of this threatening state of affairs was immediately seen in the stoppage of business, which was beginning to revive with returning peace. Foreigners were entering the city in large numbers, and the hotels were getting full. The dread of fresh disturbances soon put a stop to these brighter prospects. Strangers who had already arrived fled with precipitation; those who were on their way turned back, and went elsewhere. Orders for apartments were countermanded, and people shunned Paris as if it were a city of the plague. It was foreseen by all observant foreigners—though to many Parisians the fact was not so apparent—that a crisis was approaching which might rival the worst horrors of September, 1792, or of June, 1848. A feeble Government was confronted by a defiant and energetic faction of insurgents, and the very air was full of rumours of blood, vague, portentous, and overshadowing. No one, however, anticipated to its full extent the calamity which, within less than three months, was to overtake the city, and delay the convalescence of France.

It must not be supposed that the National Guards of Belleville and the adjacent quarters were in complete harmony with themselves. Out of

twenty battalions, eight were described as "reactionary"—that is to say, disposed to come to terms with the existing authorities. The breach between the two sections grew wider with each day, and, had the loyal men been in the majority, the civil war which subsequently ensued might have been avoided. As it was, the malcontents had the upper-hand, and they resolved that, as long as the day of their power lasted, they would do their utmost towards imposing their opinions on the country at large. One of the sentries at Montmartre described to a gentleman who visited the spot (where, indeed, hundreds went to look at the guns, and the entrenchments, and the armed men pacing to and fro) the way in which the new Republican organisation proposed to act. Referring to the supposed coming elections, he said:—"When the new deputies are chosen for Paris, they will be elected by the battalions of the National Guard, each company of which will proceed to nominate four delegates. As there are twelve companies in a battalion, we shall have forty-eight delegates. These forty-eight delegates will in their turn nominate a Commission of Initiative, which will put itself into relations with the Central Republican Committee. By these means we shall possess a politico-military organisation by which we can watch and control the Government. The National Guards, affiliated all through the country with the Central Committee, will work under its orders, and the rural elections will be managed by a military organisation taking its initiative from Paris and the large cities, where the idea of liberty has struck root, and is springing up under the protection of a complete and devoted Republican army." M. Blanqui, in an occasional journal of his, called *Le Châtiment*, gave expression to similar views. "Arms and organisation," he wrote—"these are the true elements of progress, the only effective way of putting an end to misery. Whoever can use a weapon has bread. Rulers prostrate themselves before bayonets, but disarmed masses are swept away. France, bristling with workmen in arms, is the true herald of Socialism. In presence of proletariat armies, obstacles, distance, impossibilities, all disappear; but for unarmed proletariats, who can do no more than make ridiculous promenades and plant trees of liberty, there is first holy water, then insults, after that grapeshot, and misery always. Let the people choose." There would be little to object to in this, if it were not notorious that the French workman in arms is never content with simply asserting his own rights, but is always bent on confiscating the rights of somebody else, in order that he may construct a model system of government which shall at once amend all the evils of society and of nature. The paper called *Le Père Duchesne*—a name reproduced from the days of the first French Revolution, when it was the designation of a journal edited by the infamous Hébert—proposed a complete financial revolution, advocated the non-payment of rents, violently threatened the moneyed classes generally, and suggested the formation of combinations against wealth wherever it had accumulated. Among the mottoes to be seen carried by the National Guards at this time was one which ran—"Suppression of rents by the National Assembly." A meeting was held by a number of lawyers, merchants, and proprietors, to take the matter into consideration—probably in the hope of saving some little out of the wreck, by making timely concessions. Several schemes were proposed, by which proprietors might be compensated for losses arising out of the depreciation of their property and the impossibility of getting in their rents; and it seemed to be the prevalent opinion that many of the tenants either could not or would not pay, and that in the existing state of things it would be dangerous to ask them. There was in truth a veritable reign of terror in those ominous March days; and M. Veuillot, in an article in the Roman Catholic organ, the *Univers*, said, with perfect truth, "The mob do what they like—drown a policeman, flog a woman, or demolish a house, at their pleasure; and no one dares interfere. At this moment the lowest rabble reigns in the capital of civilisation." The same writer added, with equal pertinence and courage, that, unless the manhood of Paris drove the rabble back with sticks, it would be upon them while M. Thiers was still considering how he should pay the Germans their money.

The Assembly at Bordeaux all this while continued to hold its sittings; and on the 8th of March Victor Hugo contrived to produce a great scene of tumult. He had the folly and bad taste to declare that Garibaldi was the only general on the French side who had not been beaten. Furious exclamations arose at this, and for a long while the voice of the orator was drowned. Thereupon, with the petulance of a froward and spoiled child, Victor Hugo declared that, as the Chamber which had refused to hear Garibaldi had now refused to hear him, he would not remain a member. He accordingly wrote out his resignation, and, though repeatedly requested by the President to withdraw it, he replied, "No, no! I persist, I persist!" and at once quitted the hall.

Before the collision with the Red Republicans had actually begun, but during the previous

days of suspense and agitation, the Assembly took a very unfortunate step, which tended to widen the breach between the moderate and the ultra parties. A proposal for the transfer of the Assembly to Fontainebleau was introduced on the 10th of March, when M. Louis Blanc, speaking with much emotion, moved an amendment to the effect that the word "Paris" should be substituted for "Fontainebleau." He said that, if any danger of disturbances in Paris existed, the dignity of the Assembly would require its removal to the capital. A transfer to any other place would be fraught with peril, and might induce Paris to elect for itself a special Government, thus leading to civil war. Never were more prophetic words uttered! and it would have been well if the Assembly had taken them to heart. Other members spoke in the same sense; but it was evident that the majority of the Chamber were afraid of Paris, and determined not to go there. The question was really narrowed to a choice between Versailles and Fontainebleau; for it was of course necessary to be near Paris, though absolute contact with the unclean animal was to be avoided. Fontainebleau had been recommended by a Committee of the House; but M. Thiers was in favour of Versailles. In addressing the Chamber on the subject, he said that neither he nor his colleagues would have raised such a delicate and serious question without absolute necessity. It was imperative to put an end at once to a divided Government, which trammelled the despatch of public business. A continuance of the Assembly at Bordeaux was impossible, on account of the great distance from the capital, where the presence of the Ministers was urgently required. The task of maintaining order in Paris could not be entrusted to a Prefect or General, and there was no danger for the Assembly wherever it went. At all events, though the post of Chief of the Government was the foremost in time of danger, he could no less abandon the National Assembly. That was the reason why the Government demanded the removal of the Assembly to some place near Paris. He did not himself purpose to return immediately to Paris, but wished to be as near as possible, in order that the public service should not suffer. Fontainebleau, he contended, was not a desirable position, for more than one reason, which it would be inopportune to set forth. M. Thiers therefore implored the Chamber to vote for the transfer of the Assembly to Versailles, entreated it to believe that this was absolutely necessary, and trusted that the Government would not be forced to specify their reasons. He subsequently stated that the transfer he desired would not prejudge anything. The question of permanent settlement outside Paris would be completely reserved. It was evident throughout this speech of M. Thiers that he was in favour of the ultimate removal of the Assembly to Paris, though he considered it imprudent at the time, and that he proposed Versailles as a compromise between the ideas of the "provincials" and those of the "metropolitans." The Head of the Government was a good deal agitated during his address, and looked ill, weary, and ashy-pale. M. Louis Blanc's amendment in favour of transferring the Assembly to Paris was rejected by 427 against 154 votes, and ultimately it was decided, by 461 against 104, that the Chamber should be removed to Versailles.

It says much for the suave and temperate manner of M. Louis Blanc that he was enabled to induce the House, with all its fear and dislike of Paris, to listen not only with toleration, but even with something of enthusiasm, to his eulogy—a good deal in excess of the truth, it is to be feared—of the demeanour of the Parisians during the occupation of their city by the Germans. Was it, he asked, against a city so capable of being mistress of herself that the Assembly thought it necessary to be on its guard? As for the objection that the Chamber could not with dignity hold its sittings within range of the Prussian cannon, M. Blanc observed that the Assembly was doomed to humiliation whether the cannon were near or far; for, said he, with a happy epigrammatic turn, "they must always be too near as long as they are in France." The speaker admitted that there had been too much disorder in the capital; but could they forget the services which the "intellectual initiative" of Paris had rendered to Europe, to the world, and to humanity? "Yet," continued M. Blanc, "there are men who would discrown Paris. As if this were possible! as if one could, by means of artificial combinations, destroy that which results from the very nature of things! as if Paris were not the necessary capital of France, by its extent, by the number of its inhabitants, by its incomparable splendour, by the concourse of illustrious men whom it brings together and retains by the action of those ideas of which it is by turns the laboratory and the home, and by the majesty of conception which make it in some sort contain in its past the past of the entire country! What do I say? As if France, as if all France, were not Paris, where the departments come to meet and mingle, as rivers with the sea!" With regard to Versailles, the orator very effectively argued that it was a place in which, only a few days before, the King of Prussia, the invader of France, had sat enthroned "with a cold inso-

lence," and the magnificence of which would thenceforth have for Frenchmen "the funereal aspect of ruins." If they thought there was danger in taking the Assembly to Paris, let them consider the opinion of so shrewd a statesman as Machiavelli, who had written:—"Where one has to govern a town the internal condition of which is alarming, one of the best and surest methods is to go and live there. On the spot one sees disorders as they arise, and can at once apply a remedy; absent, one does not know of them till they have become too great to admit of cure." A subsequent speaker expressed his horror at the House being asked to follow counsels "written by a Machiavelli for a Cæsar Borgia;" at which the Assembly laughed heartily.* Certainly nothing could be less sinister than the advice quoted by M. Louis Blanc from the celebrated Italian politician; and the Chamber would have acted wisely in following such counsels. But the abandonment of Paris was a foregone conclusion with the majority; and the eloquence of Louis Blanc did not avail to change it.

The last meeting of the Assembly at Bordeaux was on March 11th. Very few members were present; and the proceedings, such as they were, had a dreary character. The President read a letter from M. George, a deputy for the Vosges, offering his resignation, on the ground that, after the acceptance by the Assembly of the resignation of his friends the members for Alsace and Lorraine, he felt he should be acting in opposition to the opinion of the Chamber if he retained his seat. M. Grévy, the President, said he could not accept the reasons offered by M. George; and argued that, although the mandate of the deputies of the departments lost or mutilated by the war was diminished, it was not annihilated. All of them were still representatives of France. M. Grévy added that the opinion of the House on the subject was so unanimous that it was not necessary to put the question to the vote. Nothing was said in opposition to this ruling, by which, as the Bordeaux correspondent of the *Daily News* remarked, it appeared to be established that all the deputies who had retired because they represented constituencies which had become German were to be reinstated in their seats. After some other formal business had been transacted, M. Grévy rose, and said that before quitting the ancient city of Bordeaux he must express the thanks of the Assembly for the sympathetic and generous reception it had given them. M. Johnston, a deputy from the Gironde, replied that the inhabitants of Bordeaux would always retain a pleasant recollection of the Assembly—a speech which, considering the circumstances of the time, and the work which the national representatives had been forced to sanction, must be regarded as a great concession to the forms of courtesy. The first meeting at Versailles was appointed for March 20th, and the Assembly then broke up.

The distrust and cowardice thus shown by the Assembly contributed greatly to the difficulties and perils of the situation. It was evidence of a resolve to draw a sharp line of demarcation between Paris and the provinces, and it caused the Parisians to fear that their old historic city was going to be deprived of her ancient rank as the capital of France. Moreover, it was a confession of weakness, and at once exasperated and invited attack. The *Vengeur*, in an extremely violent article on the subject, said:—

"They speak of transferring the National Assembly to Versailles. It is the city of the States-General. The place is still warm with the Prussian. Where could one be better? The traitors who have delivered up France could not sit in a better place than in the palace of Louis XVI., still charged with high monarchical traditions and noble secrets of the iron closet. They will find there the dust of their ancestors and the example of their virtues. The Assembly of the notables at Versailles! Shade of the Austrian, be avenged! Antoinette or Augusta—the name is nothing. Madame Veto, the foreigner, reaction, threatens once again France and the Republic. People of Paris, remember the *Ça ira*. The Rural Assembly fears Paris. It is natural. It fears it and hates it as the Republic. It fears and hates the people of Paris as much as it loves the King—King of France or of Prussia, what matters it, so long as he *is* King? . . . There is not dirt enough in the streets of Paris with which to receive suitably Messieurs the Deputies, sent as representatives of the people, starting as French citizens, and turning up with a King the more, and two provinces the less, with an infamous peace which transforms Paris into a faubourg of Berlin, and France into a vassal realm of the Holy German Empire. It is not to Versailles that the Deputies should be transferred, but to Cayenne!"

Among the many unfortunate circumstances of the day, few were more so than that the Assembly should have placed at the head of affairs a statesman like M. Thiers, who, notwithstanding his new protestations of Republicanism, was regarded by the masses as a secret supporter of that Orleanist cause to which the services of his earlier years had been given. A large number of persons would not believe in his Republican conversion. Had the supreme position been conferred on some politician who, while holding moderate views, belonged unquestionably to the democratic party, the confidence of Paris and of the other large towns would doubtless have been greater. It is true that an official proclama-

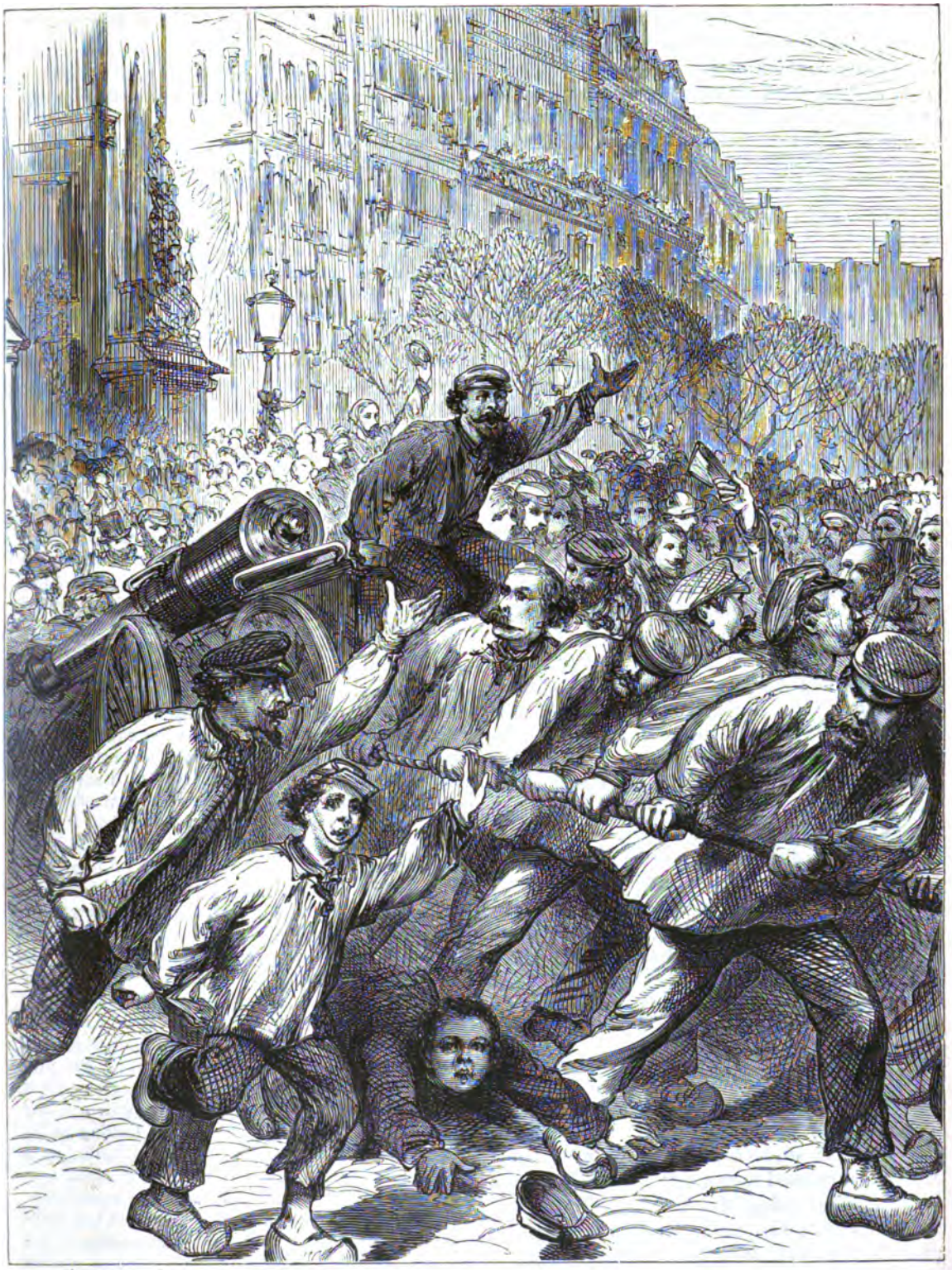
* *Times* Bordeaux correspondent.

tion of the Government stated that it engaged its honour to found the Republic; but the scoffers said that Louis Napoleon had made the same engagement, and yet that the Republic had been destroyed. M. Henri Brissac, writing in *Le Vengeur*, observed:—"If by any possibility M. Thiers were sincere, how could he prove the fact? He could not prove it. His original Royalist stain stands in the way. He may take earth and heaven to witness; may every day renew his declaration; may demonstrate the existence of the Republic by A and B; yet he will not succeed in diminishing by one iota the distrust he inspires. Good sense speaks more eloquently than orations. The Monarchical brain of M. Thiers, in which seventy-four years of rust are encrusted, is not more capable of secreting the Republican form than Abraham's wife was capable of conceiving a child. Now, Jehovah, who is day by day going more out of fashion, has ceased to work miracles." Such was the style in which the journals of the extreme party treated the questions of the day. It was not a style for imitation; but in this particular instance M. Brissac probably gave expression to the views of the Moderate as well as the Red Republicans.



GENERAL CLÉMENT THOMAS.

The indisposition of the Administration to proclaim the Republic as the form of government now settled in France, was another circumstance which excited the suspicions of the Parisian agitators, and rendered them still less disposed to accept the rule of M. Thiers; though it cannot be denied that to have made any such proclamation would have been unjustifiable, considering that the country itself had never pronounced on the subject, and that the Chamber was notoriously Monarchical in its leanings. Alluding to this very subject in the House



THE INSURGENTS SEIZING THE GUNS.

on March 10th, M. Thiers said that, although the Assembly bore a sovereign character, and might have resolved itself into a Constituent Assembly, it had given proofs of its wisdom by restricting itself to the reorganisation of the country. That must be its task, in the fulfilment of which, an immense amount of work must be gone through. M. Thiers begged the Assembly to avoid all questions that would cause division and excite political passions. The Cabinet was working in perfect agreement, and was only seeking the welfare of the country and the means of alleviating its misfortunes. The speaker appealed to the representatives of the two great parties to act in concord for the work of reorganisation, supplicating them not to calumniate each other, and insisting, above all things, upon the imperious necessity of reserving all complicated questions. If the Assembly wanted a permanent Republic, it would entirely depend upon itself to obtain it. The Republic was in its hands. "For my own part," concluded M. Thiers, "I vow before history that I will never deceive you, that I will never prejudge a question away from you, that I will never act in any way so as to disown or betray your sovereignty." In an earlier part of his speech, the orator characterised the action of the Red Republicans in Paris as having originated in that which was not culpable in itself, because it was directed against the Prussians. It had, however, degenerated into factious opposition; but the Government hoped to be able to bring back the deluded people, and to avoid civil war. "As regards myself and my colleagues," said the Chief of the Executive, "we are all of one mind. If the peace should be disturbed, you may count on our patriotism to repress disturbances with the utmost energy. We shall never fail in this; but let us hope that such an extremity, which has been momentarily feared in France, will be finally avoided. If we can spare the shedding of blood, we shall consider it an honour to have done so." Such was the tone of confidence (real or feigned) with which, on the 10th of March, M. Thiers regarded a state of things which was on the eve of being developed into a civil war, short indeed, but savage, pitiless, and frightful in its features, to an extent but seldom paralleled in modern times.

During the discussion of these matters the Prussians continued to evacuate various posts about Paris; and on Sunday, March 12th—a day of summer-like warmth and brilliance—French troops re-entered Versailles, from which they had been excluded by the conquerors for six months. It was not until the evening that they arrived, and then they came in irregular and not very ample numbers. A special correspondent of the *Times*, describing the aspect of the town in the earlier part of the day, said:—

"The German troops marched out from Versailles at ten A.M., and they had all filed along with baggage and artillery beyond Suresnes before we reached Point du Jour. We entered Versailles by the Avenue de St. Cloud, which was as bare as the Derby course at Christmas. An *octroi* man had settled down at the *grille*, and tried to look as if he had never left it; but he had not the heart to ask if we had anything to declare. The chalk marks have not yet been removed from the doors and gateways, which record in cabalistic characters the way in which the mansions were appropriated to the soldiery and their chiefs. The staircase at No. 6, Place Hoche, which was never silent—steel clanking up and down, swords and spurs, diplomatists in uniform dealing with Mr. Odo Russell, and telegraph-bearers and friendly visitors to his fellow-lodgers—might have been a shaft in a deserted mine. The Alsatian *concierge* had gone off to bury her husband, who died a prisoner in Rastadt; the landlady sits mourning over her son, who rests in the church close at hand, a victim of the last sortie at Le Bourget, and brought home to die—two deaths in one household. Every one else has gone; and I delivered up my key as if I were handing over the charge of a mausoleum to the French maid, who wept as if her heart would break when Paris fell, and would not be comforted even by the departure of the Prussians. I went round by the grand barrack of the Artillery of the Guard, which had been vacated by the 'Cannonen Club' and the Prussian gunners, expecting to see French soldiers. There was not one. The gates were closed on the Place d'Armes. The great barrack on the corresponding front of the Place was also untenanted. I sauntered into the Rue de la Paroisse, entered a confectioner's, and asked the woman if the Prussians had left. 'Does not Monsieur see? Thank God, they marched off at ten this morning.' The shop used to be full of men eating pastry all day, but a few hours before, and paying for it. 'Are you glad, then, that they have gone?' 'The ogres! may they never live to return! The air is sweet since they went away. One can breathe.' And she drew a full breath. 'But were they so bad?' 'No, I cannot say they were; but they are so hard, so absolute, so insolent. I should not care to go to Heaven if I thought there were Prussians there.' And so I went out in the hope that she may get over her scruples ultimately, for she makes excellent *brioches*. As my companions came up with our carriage, I was aware that two men were looking at me sternly and scowlingly, and it occurred to me that some of those who had seen me when the Prussians were here would not be disinclined to express their patriotism. But they did not. The wife of a tailor who had made many tunics and casquettes for German officers, and whose shop had been full of *militär effecten*, pointed me out to some of her friends. The shop windows had been subjected to a transformation scene, and every trace of Deutschland soldiering had been swept away,

to give place to *képis* and French uniforms ; so it is likely the tailor and his wife may take to denouncing persons of Prussian proclivities at once."

Some time after the Germans had departed, two stragglers belonging to the Prussian army were seen in the main street of the town. Marching stiffly and doggedly in the centre of the broad road, and looking straight before them, they tramped through the crowd, attended by a French lad, who seemed to be directing them to some place of which they were in search. It might have been supposed that they would be roughly handled, if not murdered outright; but the people made way for them, and did not even utter a word. The laggards would probably have met with a very different reception in Paris.

It was remarked by a military observer that France at that time presented a curious scene. A victorious army was traversing her soil with songs and merriment—some on their homeward march, others on their way to the districts that were to be occupied by the Germans until they had obtained the whole of their money indemnity. A beaten army, which had served the Empire, was returning from captivity, and another, enlisted by the Republic, was seeking the various towns and villages whence its members had been drawn, passing at times through the lines of the foreign legions. No wonder that one side was depressed, the other elated. The *Staats Anzeiger*, of Berlin, published some statistics of the war, which show at a glance the extraordinary run of success which had attended the German armies, and exhibit in a brief form the extraordinary difficulties which it was necessary to overcome. The official statement says :—

"War was declared on July 15th, 1870. It terminated on February 16th, 1871, after lasting 210 days. In the first week after the declaration of war, the German troops were mobilised, their despatch to the west and disposition along the Trèves-Landau line requiring nearly a fortnight. The troops sent to the frontier amounted to nearly 600,000 men, and, to bring the whole mass up in a fortnight, about 42,000 had to be conveyed by rail per day. The transport was effected on five lines, two of which, however, were but little used. Besides the men, there were horses, guns, carriages, ammunition, and provisions to be sent. To estimate correctly the activity of the railway department in those momentous days, it ought to be remembered that until a year ago a train was thought incapable of carrying more than one battalion, or one squadron, or one battery. Four Prussian Army Corps, to get to the French frontier, had to perform a distance of from 400 to 600 miles, and had to be fed on the way. The first few days of the campaign, as well as the last period, being free from engagements, the war was practically reduced to 180 days only. In these 180 days there were 156 engagements and 17 great battles; 26 fortresses were taken, 11,650 officers and 363,000 rank and file made prisoners, and 6,700 guns and 120 eagles or standards captured. In each of the six months that active hostilities were going on, the Germans had on an average 26 engagements and three battles, taking 1,950 officers, 60,500 men, 1,110 guns, 20 eagles or standards, and 4 fortresses. Nearly every day of the war witnessed an engagement, every sixth day a fortress was conquered, every ninth day a battle was fought and gained. Comparing the number of prisoners with the duration of the war, we find that on an average 65 officers and 2,070 men were captured per day. On the same calculation, every day 38 cannon changed hands, while an eagle or a standard was carried off in triumph on two days out of every three. Looking at the chronological order of the actions, we have up to Sedan 13 engagements and 8 battles—Weissenburg, Wörth, Spicheren, Courcelles, Vionville, Gravelotte, Noiseul, and Beaumont; the four fortresses of Lutzelstein, Lichtenberg, Marsal, and Vitry being taken in the same period. The month of September was marked by 13 engagements, and by the capture of Sedan, Laon, Toul, and Strasburg. October had 37 engagements, with the capture of Soissons, Schelestadt, and Metz. November numbers 15 engagements and 2 battles (Amiens and Beaune-la-Rolande), with the fall of Verdun, Montbéliard, Neu Breisach, Ham, Thionville, La Fère, and the citadel of Amiens. December brought us 30 engagements and the battles near Orleans and on the Hallue, with the surrender of Phalsbourg and Montmédy. January, being even more prolific, had to register 48 engagements, together with the battles of Le Mans, Montbéliard, and St. Quentin, with the capitulation of Mezières, Rocroy, Peronne, Longwy, and Paris. In February the war terminated with the surrender of Belfort. In this list, the various actions near Paris, 22 of which were fought in the 130 days of the investment, are classified as mere engagements, although some of them might be well ranked as battles. Of these 22 engagements, 3 occurred in September, 8 in October, 2 in November, 4 in December, and 5 in January; in other words, between five and six per month. Of naval engagements we have three to chronicle—respectively on September 19th and 21st, and October 12th—at Hiddensee, in the Putzig Bay, and off the Havannah."

In the face of such facts as these, unhappy France could only console herself with the hope of taking ample revenge in the future. Yet at the moment when she was nursing these thoughts of renovated military vigour, and of fresh triumphs that should obliterate the memory of past defeats, she was pursuing a course with regard to her internal affairs the best calculated to render the recovery of her former power both difficult and problematical. It was by union that Germany had won; yet France, while counting already on a reversal of that success, was plunging into the fury of intestine convulsions,

as if she were not sufficiently exhausted by a disastrous foreign war, an invasion, and an armed occupation. The imbecility of the Government and the violence of the factions alike contributed to this state of things, of which the natural fruits were shortly to be seen in bloodshed, incendiarism, and ruin. Looking backward to the war that was just finished, and forward to the civil convulsion that was manifestly approaching, unhappy France might have applied to her condition the words in which Coleridge depicted his own impressions in the agony of a feverish dream :—

"A lurid light, a trampling throng
Sense of intolerable wrong,
And whom I scorn'd, those only, strong!
Thirst of revenge; the powerless will
Still baffled, and yet burning still;
Desire with loathing strangely mix'd,
On wild or hateful objects fix'd;
Fantastic passions, maddening brawl,
And shame and terror over all!"

21.12.05

CHAPTER XXIV.

Weakness of the Government—Stoppage of Industry—Worthless Character of the Parisian Police—Further Negotiations with the Insurgents—Failure of Attempts at Conciliation—Determination of the Government to adopt Stringent Measures—Proclamations of the Ministers to the Citizens of Paris and the National Guards—Military Movements on the Morning of March 18th—Recovery of the Cannon by the Troops—Fraternisation of the Soldiers with the National Guards—The Guns once more seized by the Rebels—Frightful State of Paris—Assassination of Generals Clément Thomas and Lecomte—Opinions on the Murder of the Generals—Arrest of General Chanzy by the Insurgents—Animosity against the Military Commanders Withdrawal of the Government from Paris—Proceedings of the Leaders on both Sides—Results of the Revolution of September, 1870—Aspect of Paris on Sunday, March 19th—Agitation at Versailles—Fears of a Buonapartist Plot—Arrest of M. Rouher at Boulogne—Suggested Compromise—Dissatisfaction of the Parisian Middle Classes with M. Thiers' Government—First Sitting of the National Assembly at Versailles—Further Discussions in the Assembly on the State of Affairs—Reaction in Paris—Revolutionary Measures—Acts of Pillage—Impending Civil War.

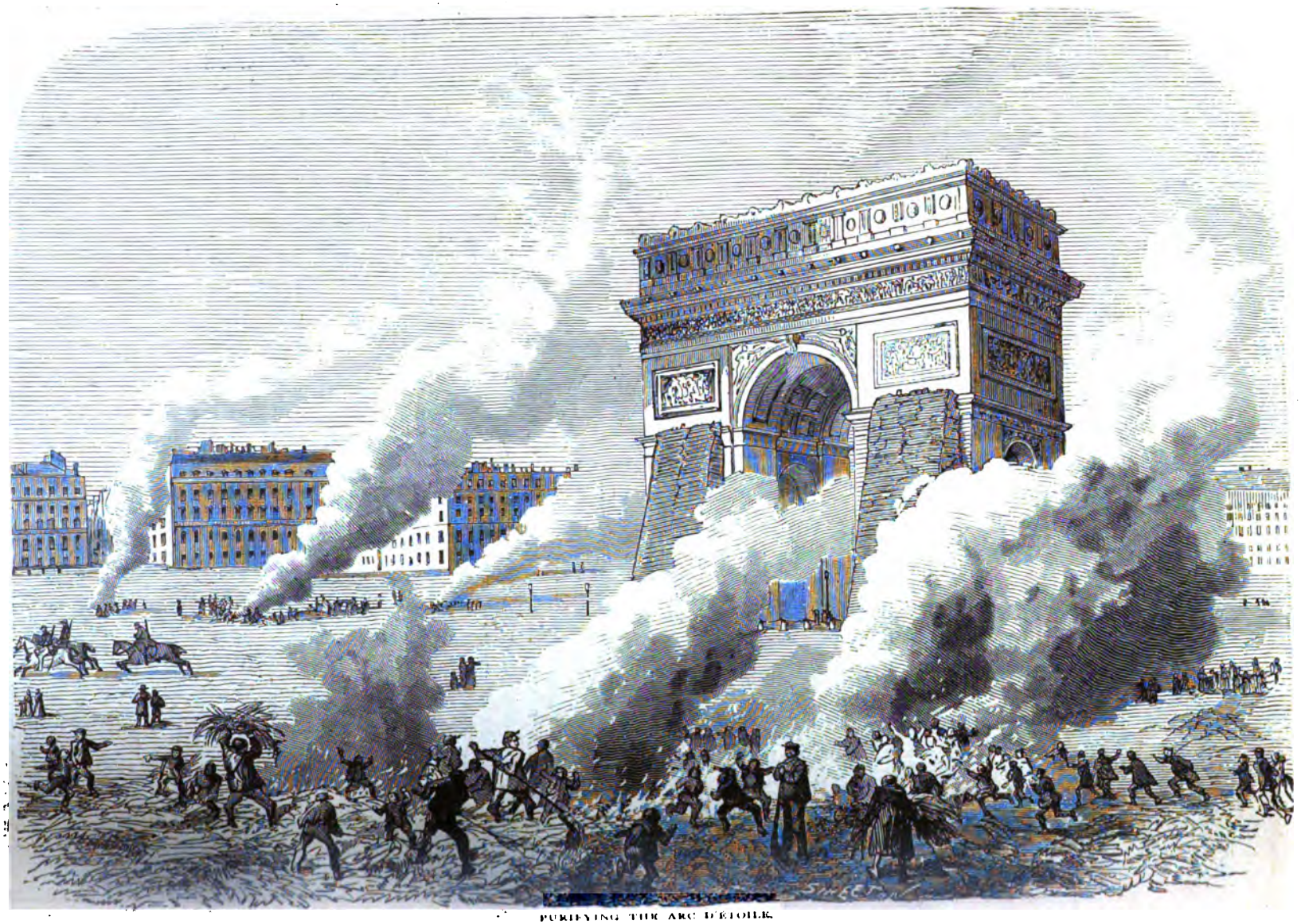
DISPIRITED, but not altogether daunted, by a change in the weather, which once more became cold, snowy, and wet, the National Guards of Montmartre and of the other disaffected quarters continued to watch over their guns, and to defy the Government. The Government, with a craven leniency of the most culpable character, actually continued to pay these rebels the accustomed thirty sous a day, thus conniving at their own danger and dishonour. Those of the insurgent National Guards who wished to escape the trouble and fatigue of doing sentry's duty over the cannon, and who were sufficiently well off to purchase immunity, gave up their pay to the more needy, who were in this way enabled, together with the allowance to their wives, to enjoy an income of four francs a day, derived from the very authorities they were bearding. The money thus obtained at no greater cost of labour than a little soldiering was so attractive to the more idle and dissipated spirits of the citizen legions, that it acted as a great inducement to them to prolong the existing situation indefinitely, and so avoid the necessity of returning to regular work. Large business firms were actually obliged to give up the execution of orders, because they could not get the artisans to leave their military follies for the duller and less attractive pursuits of industry. If, lured by high wages, they came for a few hours, they would return next day to the idle pleasure of playing at soldiers, and the mischievous privilege of threatening society. In other respects the Government suffered itself to be defied with impunity. Although the decree suppressing the revolutionary newspapers stated that no new journals would be allowed to appear without express permission, several of these prints, abounding in the most seditious matter, came out every day without hindrance. Blanqui and Flourens, moreover, issued posters protesting against their recent condemnation, and denouncing as null the authorities by whom they had been sentenced to death. The truth is that the police of Paris was at that time of the feeblest and most preposterous character. The Imperial force, which was destroyed in the revolutionary days of September, had been succeeded by a body of incapable officers, hastily organised by Count de Kératry, the new Prefect. These men seemed never to learn the duties of their office, and, by their easy indifference, became the laughing-stock of the whole population. General Valentin was now appointed Prefect of Police, with instructions to organise a really effective body; but to do this was a work of time, and the outbreak of the 18th of March overtook the new Prefect before he had any opportunity to remedy the defects which he found.

A few days previous to the armed collision which led to so much ulterior bloodshed, the insurgent

National Guards held a meeting on Montmartre, at which it was moved, and unanimously resolved, that Generals Vinoy and d'Aurelles de Paladines should be requested to resign their commands at once. Three of the citizen soldiers were deputed to wait on those commanders, and, in the name of the people, to summon them to lay down their powers. For some reason or other, the commissioners never presented themselves to the generals, and indeed disappeared altogether. There had, indeed, been symptoms of wavering on the part of the rebels, and a sort of promise had been made that if the guns were sent for they would be given up. Accordingly, a number of artillery carriages were dispatched to Montmartre on the 13th of March; but the malcontents had by that time changed their minds. They told the teamsters that they would give back to each battalion separately the cannon belonging to it, upon a receipt being rendered; and the artillery carriages were compelled to return as they had come. This failure of the Government was soon followed by another, equally ignominious. It was resolved by the authorities, on the 16th, to make an attempt to seize the cannon parked in the Place Royale, then in possession of the insurgents. No resistance was expected, and at eight o'clock in the evening a hundred artillery horses were sent to carry off the guns. The National Guards, however, refused to surrender them, and again the Government had to confess itself beaten by the mere determination of the rebels not to recognise its authority. The state of things had now become so serious that it was evident the Government must either cease to dally with the insurrection, or consent to be swept away by the revolutionary tide. M. Thiers had said in the Assembly at Bordeaux, a little before its transference to Versailles, that he did not parley with sedition; such had never been his habit through life. He had, however, permitted a great deal too much parleying with the Red Republicanism of Belleville and the adjacent quarters, and the evil had grown in strength from being trifled with. This, perhaps, was inevitable in the early days of March, when the Government had no force at its disposal; but, for more than a week past, General Vinoy had had under his command a sufficient number of soldiers to make at any rate a decent attempt to re-establish the authority of those in power, and he would probably have done so but for their hesitation, and the miserable necessity of Republics in France to cringe before any factious mob that chooses to throw up a barricade, and shout for what they are pleased to call Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. A council of general officers was held on the night of March 17th, and it was decided to use the whole military power of the Government for the reduction of the insurgents to order, and the recovery of the stolen cannon.

Nothing is done in Paris without the issue of a proclamation to the citizens; and, in accordance with this rule, the walls of Paris were found placarded, on the morning of the eventful 18th of March, with the following proclamation of M. Thiers, countersigned by the nine other Ministers who formed the Government:—

"We address ourselves to you—to your reason, to your patriotism; and we hope to be heard. Your great city, which can only live by order, is being deeply disturbed in some districts. This state of things, without spreading to other districts, is, however, sufficient to prevent the resumption of labour and well-being. For some time past, ill-intentioned persons have, under the pretence of resisting the Prussians, who are no longer before your walls, constituted themselves masters of a part of the city, and have constructed fortifications on which they keep guard, and on which they force you to mount guard with them, by order of an unknown committee. They pretend alone to command a part of the National Guard, and do not recognise the authority of General d'Aurelles de Paladines, who so nobly deserves to be at your head. Their wish is to institute a Government in opposition to the legal Government instituted by universal suffrage. Those persons who have already done you so much harm—those persons who on the 15th of December last you yourselves scattered after they had pretended that it was their intention to defend you against the Prussians, who did but appear inside your walls, and whose final departure is only delayed by these disorders—those persons have turned their guns, so that if fired they would reduce your homes to ruins, and kill your children and yourselves. Finally, they have compromised the Republic, instead of defending it; because, if it became the opinion of France that the Republic is necessarily accompanied by disorders, the Republic would be lost. Do not believe them. Hear the truth, which we tell you in all sincerity. The Government, instituted by the entire nation, would have retaken the cannons robbed from the State, and which actually threaten you, have removed those ridiculous entrenchments which stop your commerce, and have placed in the hands of justice the criminals who do not fear to make civil war succeed foreign war; but it has wished to give to the deceived time to separate from those who deceive them. Still time is granted to the good men to separate from the bad; and you are entreated, by your love of peace, by your well-being, by the well-being of all France, not to prolong indefinitely the duration of this state of things. Commerce is stopped, the shops are deserted, large orders which would arrive from all parts are suspended, your arms are paralysed. Credit will not revive in capitals the Government of which, while the territory of the country needs to be delivered from the presence of an enemy, hesitates to



PURIFYING THE ARC D'ETOILE.



MARSHAL MACMAHON.

come forward. In your interests, as well in those of the city as in those of France, the Government has resolved to act. The criminals who affect to institute a Government must be delivered to regular justice; and the cannons taken away must be restored to the arsenals. To carry out this act of justice and reason, the Government counts upon your assistance. It believes that the good citizens will separate from the bad, and will support, instead of resisting, public opinion; that they will thus hasten to restore peace to the city, and render a service to the Republic, which, in the opinion of France, will be ruined by disorder. Parisians, we speak to you thus because we esteem your good sense, wisdom, and patriotism; but, having given you this warning, we shall proceed to have recourse to force, because there must be peace, at all hazards, without a day's delay; so that order, the condition of well-being, may return—order complete, immediate, and permanent."

Later in the day the authorities issued a proclamation to the National Guards, in which allusion was made to "the absurd rumour" that the Government was preparing a *coup d'état*. The Government of the Republic, it was added, had not, and could not have, any other aim than the safety of the Republic; but it was determined to have done with an insurgent committee whose members—men almost all unknown to the population—represented only communist doctrines, and would consign Paris to pillage and France to death, if they were not restrained. These proclamations were characterised by the qualities which belong to all French official utterances of the same nature. They betrayed the weakness they would fain have hidden in the turn of a sentence or the elaboration of a platitude.

Paris was disturbed very early on the morning of the 18th by the beating of the *rappel*, as the Government troops proceeded through the dark and deserted streets to the various points on which they were to be directed. Four principal attacks were to be made on the disaffected quarters of Paris. One body of military, composed of infantry, artillery, and cavalry, under General Susbielle, was to operate against Montmartre; a second, under General Wolff, was to move on the Bastille; a third, under General Henrion, was to deal with the Cité; while the fourth, under General Faron, would grapple with the malcontents of Belleville. The troops destined for Montmartre reached that locality some time before dawn, and the National Guards keeping watch there seem to have been staggered by the unexpected onslaught. The streets leading up to the high ground were occupied by the Government soldiers, and guns and mitrailleuses were planted at those points which were the most likely to give the attacking force a command over the whole position. A regiment from the army of Faidherbe, which had arrived in Paris the day before, went towards the Tower of Solferino, surprised about a score or so of National Guards, and gained a complete mastery over the heights. The guns were now in possession of the troops, and the Government operations appeared to be entirely successful. A number of men and women stood gloomily about in knots, denouncing the supineness of their chiefs, and reviling M. Thiers and his colleagues. The battery above the Place St. Pierre was also occupied by the men of the Line, who at once began levelling the embrasures, filling up the trenches, and preparing to remove the cannon. At this point the troops had stolen upon the insurgent sentries in the rear during the darkness, and had struck such terror into them that they fled. Their cowardice provoked the strong indignation of some women, who, a few hours later, were discussing the events that had taken place. "If they had only left the guns for *us* to guard," said one of these amazons, "they would not have been captured so easily." The history of Parisian revolutions shows that the women are often more spirited, and more diabolical, than the men.

So far, the operations of the Government were fortunate, and all might have gone well, had it not been for one of those instances of gross incompetency for dealing with a serious crisis which marked the whole course of the war with Prussia. It might have been supposed that the troops would have been accompanied by artillery carriages and horses for removing the guns directly they were captured; but as, a few days previously, gun-carriages had been sent without any military force to compel the surrender of the weapons, so now soldiers were despatched to seize the weapons without any means of taking them away. Several hours passed, and the soldiers still stood about, exposed to the comments of the mob, and to whatever influences could be brought to bear on their loyalty. Barricades began to appear in the streets, leading up to the points occupied by the troops of the Line; and men, women, and boys were allowed to get into conversation with the military, to whom they represented that the Government was provoking a civil war with a view to the destruction of the Republic. The insurgent National Guards had also rallied by this time, trooping in large numbers from various localities; and matters began to put on a very different face from what they had worn early in the morning. That danger of fraternisation between the Line and the National Guards which is always so imminent in Parisian disturbances,

unless the former are handled with vigour, and at once gain important successes, soon made itself apparent. * In the course of the morning a large column of citizen soldiers was seen advancing along the Boulevard Ornano towards a body of regulars. In front of the former were several soldiers of the Line, who had already made common cause with the insurgents, and who were now evidently bent on persuading their comrades to do the same. As soon as they had got near to the main body of the Line regiment, the soldiers leading the National Guards shouted, "Long live the Republic!" The next instant the whole of the regular troops threw the butts of their rifles into the air, and the National Guards, instantly reversing their own butts, responded with enthusiastic cries of "Long live the Line!" The soldiers in the balconies and windows of the houses on both sides of the way, where they had of course been placed with a view to flanking the citizen soldiers, and firing on them if need were, came down, and joined the general movement. A vast amount of embracing, kissing, and talking ensued; the women wept with joy, and the officers of the regular army looked embarrassed and helpless.

Similar scenes were at the same time occurring in other parts of the town; in all directions the soldiers refused to fire on the people. At one place a woman said that the officers were contemptible beggars, who could fight against French fathers of families but not against the Prussians; and she asked a soldier if he was not ashamed of coming to fire on the people. "Who said we were going to fire upon you?" was the retort of the soldier. "See," said one of the bystanders, "how uneasily these poor fellows go through the villainous task they are called on to perform! Is it not a pity such brave boys should be forced to do such dirty work?" The soldier replied, "We have not done any dirty work yet. Do you think I will fire on Frenchmen? Am not I a Frenchman? Have I not been twice taken prisoner by the Prussians —once at Sedan, and once at Dijon? Why, then, should I fire on my countrymen?"* By this time (which was getting on towards eleven o'clock in the morning), several horses had been sent to the spots where the guns were planted, and preparations were being made for removing them. Those on Montmartre were already in motion, when, at the bottom of a steep street, a number of National Guards stopped the way, and levelled their rifles at the regulars. Seeing this, General Paturel, who was in command of the latter, gave the word to his men to fire. He was immediately stunned by a blow from the butt-end of a rifle carried by one of the National Guards, and with a yell of savage enthusiasm the troops raised their rifles in the air, and went over to the insurgents. The guns again passed into the hands of the rebels, who proceeded to erect batteries for their reception. A little way off, a captain of Chasseurs was shot through and through with numerous balls, for having given an order to fire. Several shots proceeded from the windows, and some men of the Line were killed and wounded. The rest of the regular troops then moved off, and left the ground in possession of the insurrection. They were met some time later by an English correspondent, looking sulky, half-beaten, and half-mutinous, straggling along with no order or discipline, and their officers following with crestfallen faces. They were in truth, for the most part, the levies whom M. Gambetta had raised in the autumn, and who had not been long enough in the army to acquire the feeling of soldiers. A subscription was got up in the streets for the soldiers who had joined the rebels, and who were without food; and many persons brought them their own dinners, as well as money. It was but too clear that the Government had been ignominiously defeated in the first serious attempt it had made to bring the malcontent National Guards to a sense of their duty to the State.

A description of the general appearance of Paris during that morning, and of the terrible aspect of some of the Red Republican National Guards, given by one of the *Times* correspondents, helps to explain the events of the day, and in particular the frightful tragedy which has yet to be related. This observer recorded:—

"Making towards the river-side, I passed through a number of back streets, in all of which there was a beating of drums and a running to and fro of National Guards, and animated discussions on the emergency. Coming out on the Quai des Celestins, I crossed the river by the Pont de Marie, about which there was more than one strong post of National Guards. I wandered all over the Latin Quarter, but without hearing or seeing anything new till, coming out at the Palace of the Luxembourg, I observed that the gardens were one vast camp, and that the pavement outside was crowded with soldiers. The grounds inside were thickly studded with tents, and the soldiers were sitting at camp-fires, and cooking their food in the open air. There were double posts on the gates, and none but soldiers in the camp. There were two field-pieces outside the nearest end of the gardens and close to the Boulevard St. Michel. Further on, at the extremity of the gardens, there was another gun in the roadway of the Boulevard. But there were no crowds here, and nothing beyond the presence of the military and the

* *Times* correspondent.

cannon to indicate that anything extraordinary was either going on or expected in Paris. It was the same all along the Route d'Orleans as far as the *enceinte;* but in passing the end of the Route du Maine which comes out on the Orleans road, I saw that Montrouge was up and stirring, though it did surrender its cannons to the lawful authorities a few days ago. I have never seen anything more threatening than the attitude of the people in this quarter. They were out in thousands on the Route du Maine, and scarcely a man or boy was without arms. In a dilapidated shop at the corner of the Rue Rochefoucault, the Opposition Commander-in-Chief of the National Guards has his head-quarters. The streams of Nationals of the fourteenth arrondissement were going to and coming from these premises. I saw among them men who are typical revivals of some of the characters of which there are pictures in Lamartine's 'History of the Girondists.' It was positively frightful to see arms in the hands of such men. They are not at all particular as to costume, particularly in the matter of head-gear. Numbers of them wear slouched felt hats, and have hair falling to their shoulders, and I saw a brace of pistols in the belt of more than one of them. There is a more than Republican fraternity among them. Many were so well provided with cartridges that they stuffed them into their pockets. Not far from the quarters of their Commander-in-Chief, I met a little youth who could not have been more than fourteen at the outside. He wore a long grey coat, high boots, a slouched hat, and was armed with a chassepôt twice as high as himself, and a pair of pistols. He was walking at a rapid pace, as if trying to overtake some life-and-death business. On my making bold to ask him what affair he had on hand, this juvenile swashbuckler told me France was in danger! Before the Commander-in-Chief's door there was a guard of Nationals, who kept a line that extended for some distance out on the roadway. On the pavement stood an enthusiastic-looking officer, with a drawn sabre in his hand, and a pistol with a steel stock in his belt. His hair was unusually long, and he wore one of the slouched hats. He was addressing the Guards in energetic terms; with his sword he suited the action to the word, and his oratory raised his comrades to high enthusiasm. I endeavoured to get near enough to hear him; the guard politely but resolutely put me back. The women and children were all out at Montrouge, and all the walls were placarded with a proclamation from a committee stating that the National Guards are the protectors of the Republic, and that their chief and their officers ought to be appointed by them and them alone. In all the wine-shops, and at all the corners down to the Boulevard de Montrouge, there were National Guards, and in some cases I saw them linked with soldiers of the Line. Every man of them carried a chassepôt; and it needed no verbal declaration on their part to tell one that they were not out to help the authorities."

The most serious event of the day was one which these truculent-looking National Guards were well calculated to execute, and which recalled the worst features of 1793. General Lecomte, who commanded the body of troops which first took possession of the Buttes Montmartre, and General Clément Thomas, who was at the head of the National Guards during the siege, were captured by the insurgents, and foully assassinated. The latter was found moving among the crowd near the Place St. Pierre. He was in plain clothes, and not acting in any official capacity; but the mob regarded him as a representative of authority, and it was resolved to put him to death. Being asked if he was not General Thomas, he at first denied the fact, but afterwards admitted it, and asked if he had not always done his duty. "You are a wretch and a traitor!" said one of the insurgents, seizing him by the collar. His captors then dragged him into a house in the Rue des Rosiers, which served as the head-quarters of the Revolutionary Committee, and here, after a pretence of trial, he was sentenced to be shot. Subsequently a reprieve was granted; but he was subjected to the reproaches of his guards, one of whom, holding a pistol to his breast, said, "Swear that you have never betrayed France or the Republic!" The poor old general shrugged his shoulders in a kind of stupor; and the more violent of the National Guards then dragged him, with many kicks and insults, into a little garden at the back. General Lecomte was forced to the same spot shortly afterwards, and both suffered the vengeance of the mob. It is said that the members of the Revolutionary Committee insisted that the generals should not be shot, and they afterwards expressed regret at the horrible occurrence, but their protests were unheeded. General Thomas was despatched first. He was pushed against a wall; several National Guards stood a few yards off, and, not raising their rifles to the shoulder, but firing from the hip, shot him dead with several balls. He stood bravely, with his hat in his hand, and did not flinch for a moment, but at the last instant exclaimed, "Cowards!" A correspondent of the *Daily News*, who received the facts from two gentlemen of the Belgian Ambulance, taken prisoners in mistake for police spies, and for a long while threatened with death themselves, related that Thomas "was not killed at once with a volley. First he received one shot, and shook as he received it; but he remained upright. Then there was another shot, and another convulsion of the fine old man's frame; but still he was erect. And so shot after shot was given, until the general at last fell forward, hat in hand." One account says that he received fifteen shots in all, of which the last struck him under the right eye. General Lecomte was killed in a much shorter time. He

had been arrested at the moment when his troops raised their rifles in the air, and, according to the *Soir*, was at first taken to the Château Rouge, where he was required to sign an engagement not to lift his sword against Paris, to which he assented. He was next required to send orders to those of his troops who still remained at their posts to return to their quarters, which he did. Soon afterwards he was taken to the Rue des Rosiers, where he underwent an examination. Finally he was removed to the adjoining garden, and placed with his back against the wall. When he reached the fatal spot, he was visibly affected on beholding the corpse of General Clément Thomas. Being compelled to pass before the body, he uncovered, and then, calmly replacing his *képi*, faced towards the firing party with uplifted head and folded arms. He was very pale, and uttered a few words of protest. The firing party was composed of soldiers belonging to the 88th Regiment of the Line. "It is your turn now," they cried; "you gave the order to fire on the people." At the third shot he threw up his hands, and plunged headforemost on to the ground, a corpse.

The Belgian gentlemen were on the very point of being shot also, when an officer of the Garibaldian corps protested against their execution, unless it could be proved that they really were police agents. After some hours' suspense, a member of the Central Committee proposed to restore them to liberty if they would sign a paper attesting that the Committee refused to sanction the execution of the two generals. This they were very glad to do, to save their lives; and they were presented with a document badly written and still worse spelt. It was afterwards announced in the revolutionary papers that the Central Committee of the National Guard had ordered an investigation into the circumstances connected with the murders. Even the *Rappel* announced the fact of the assassinations with expressions of profound grief, and stated that the National Guards sought to prevent the execution, but that an angry crowd, among whom were several Francs-tireurs and soldiers of the Line, called out for death. The tribunal that condemned the generals was said to be presided over by an artisan of the International Society named Assi, who had been connected with various Socialist movements. The leaders of the revolutionary party endeavoured to extenuate the murder of the generals by saying in their *Official Journal* that Lecomte ordered charges against women and children in the Rue Pigalle, and that Thomas was taking a plan of the barricades at Montmartre; so that both had "made themselves amenable to the laws of war, which do not allow either assassinations of women, or espionage." In a far different strain, the *Journal des Débats* wrote:—"The 18th of March will be remembered as one of the gloomiest in our history. Revolution is mistress of Paris. France will unanimously condemn the assassination of Generals Lecomte and Thomas, as well as this odious insurrection, which has neither an avowed pretext nor purpose. What will be the result of these deplorable events? Will the provinces come to re-establish order? Will the revolt die out from utter absence of resistance, as a fire without fuel? Or is the greatest of all humiliations reserved for us, and are we to see the enemy re-enter our walls? Whatever the future may bring, this terrible day has done more damage to the Republic than all the Buonapartist intrigues could have wrought. France lacerating herself with her own hands is as ill and suffering as the Republic. All good citizens have their duty clearly traced out—to rally round the Government constituted by the legitimate representatives of the country. The National Assembly has the sole right to command. In yielding obedience to it lies the last hope of the country." This was the sentiment generally felt throughout France; but in Paris itself the Red Republicans were triumphant, and it required no little courage to denounce their acts.

Several other officers, besides Generals Thomas and Lecomte, were seized by the insurgents. Among these was General Chanzy, who, though known to be a thorough Republican, and though popular on account of his having voted against peace, was for a time in great danger. His capture, however, did not take place until the following day, when he arrived in Paris by rail from Tours. The insurgents, having been informed of his approach, possessed themselves of the railway station, and, when the train stopped at the fortifications for the delivery of tickets, presented their revolvers at his head, and carried him off a prisoner. Efforts were made for his release, but at first without any result, as the rebels declared that they held him as a hostage, and would shoot him if they were attacked. After being detained nearly a week, however, he was released on the evening of Saturday, March 25th, and arrived at Versailles next morning on foot, not daring to take the train lest he should be arrested once more. Other officers seized during the sanguinary collision of the 18th were subsequently allowed to depart, the insurgents being apparently afraid of repeating the atrocity of the Rue des Rosiers. General Faron, with two or three hundred men, was for some hours blockaded on the heights of

Montmartre, but ultimately succeeded in freeing himself after overthrowing three barricades, in carrying which his soldiers used their bayonets, but not their firearms. A very vindictive feeling towards all the generals was expressed by the mob and by the organs of their party. The *Cri du Peuple*—which of course reappeared after the triumph of the Red Republicans—said that it was necessary to bring to justice all the treacherous generals who had betrayed France; and it specifically mentioned by name MacMahon, Canrobert, Bazaine, Ducrot, Vinoy, and Trochu. The first two of these officers were in Paris during the outbreak; but, on hearing of the assassination of Generals Thomas and Lecomte, they prudently left for Versailles.



GOING TO THE FOOD DISTRIBUTION.

Finding that he could not rely on his soldiers, and that he was powerless to coerce the disaffected portions of Paris, General Vinoy, towards the evening of the 18th, withdrew, with the loyal troops of the Line and the Gendarmerie, to the left or southern bank of the Seine, and on the following morning to Versailles, where M. Thiers had already fixed his quarters. A few days before the outbreak, the several Government departments had established themselves in Paris; but they were now compelled to seek a safer locality. M. Jules Ferry received from General Vinoy, on the 18th, an order to evacuate the Hôtel de Ville, which he very reluctantly executed, feeling convinced, as he afterwards assured a newspaper correspondent, that he could have defended the building with forty resolute men. He quitted it alone by a side door, and went to the Mayoralty of the first arrondissement, opposite the Louvre, to confer with the Mayor. Being recognised, he was followed by a mob, shouting "Death to Ferry!" There was every reason to fear that, if caught, he would share the fate of the murdered generals; and he therefore escaped out of a back window by a ladder, and landed in a court of the church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois. He slept that night in the house of a friend, and on the following morning took the first train to Versailles, where the members and supporters of the Government were beginning to rally.

The rebels continued to gain upon Paris hour by hour during the remainder of the 18th. They took possession of the Prince Eugène barracks,



ARREST OF THE ARCHBISHOP OF PARIS.

where the 120th Regiment of the Line requested to be relieved of their arms by the 167th Battalion of the National Guards. They planted the red flag on the column of the Bastille, and continued to erect numerous barricades of the most formidable character, which they swore not to surrender but with their lives. When night closed in, it was evident that Paris was at the mercy of the revolutionists, and the next morning was awaited with the utmost anxiety. The respectable part of the population kept for the most part in-doors, and the few civilians who ventured out in the districts more especially disaffected were pretty certain to be dogged and threatened, under the suspicion that they were spies. In the course of the evening the Mayors and deputies of Paris held a meeting, at which it was agreed to send a deputation to the Government to obtain the removal of General Vinoy, General d'Aurelles de Paladines, General Valentin, and M. Ferry, from their posts, and the substitution of Generals Billault and Langlois, M. Adam, and M. Dorian. They also resolved to ask that an election should be held for a Municipal Council. The deputation, on its return to Paris, was accompanied by the secretary of the Ministry of the Interior and the secretary of the Mairie of Paris, who came to announce that M. Jules Ferry had resigned his post of Mayor. The secretary of the Ministry of the Interior then read a decree removing General d'Aurelles de Paladines, and appointing General Langlois Commander-in-Chief of the National Guard. The newly-appointed commander proceeded at once to the Hôtel de Ville, where he was received by M. Brunet, the commander of the insurrectionary forces, who asked him whether he recognised the Central Committee. Having replied in the negative, and added that he never would consent to be Commander-in-Chief of the insurrection, Brunet replied, "Then I do not acknowledge your authority." General Langlois accordingly left the Hôtel de Ville, to hand in his resignation; and the insurgents thus received another proof of the reality of the power they wielded.

On the following day (Sunday, the 19th), the Central Committee of the insurgents installed provisional committees at all the Mairies, and took possession of the public offices and telegraphs. A good many proclamations were issued by the new authorities, and one of them was expressed in these words:—

"Citizens,—The people of Paris has shaken off the yoke attempted to be imposed on it. Calm and impassable in its force, it has waited without fear, even as without provocation, for the brazen-faced madmen who thought to meddle with the Republic. This time our brothers of the army have not chosen to lay hands on the holy ark of our liberties. Thanks to all; and let Paris and France lay together the foundations of a Republic acclaimed with all its consequences—the only Government which will close for ever the era of invasions and of civil wars. The state of siege is raised. The people of Paris is convoked within its districts to make its communal elections. The safety of all the citizens is assured by the concurrence of the National Guard.

"Hôtel de Ville, March 19th, 1871."

Another proclamation was addressed to the National Guards, and was signed (like the first) by the members of the Central Committee, as follows: "Assi, Billioray, Ferrat, Babick, Edouard Moreau, G. Dupont, Varlin, Boursier, Mortier, Gouhier, Lavalette, Fr. Jourde, Rousseau, Ch. Lullier, Blanchet, J. Grolard, Barroud, H. Gerésme, Fabre, Pougeret." Very little was known of any of these men; yet they had suddenly contrived to raise themselves to the heights of supreme power. This body appears not to have been the same as the Central Committee of the National Guard, although the two acted in concert, and ultimately coalesced, and adopted statutes. The members of the National Guards Committee were as unknown to the general public as those of the other confederation; but they were directed by a person of some ability and much ambition—a young man of twenty, named Henri, who had been connected with the disturbances at Lyons, and who had now, by his energy and influence, put the greater part of Paris in a state of admirable defence. In the utter disorganisation of Government and of police, consequent on the insane revolution of September, 1870, these fanatics were left, undisturbed and unseen, to mature their plans against the very bases of social order; and when an attempt was made to grapple with the evil, it had grown too strong to be put down, except by a sanguinary struggle. Precisely the same dangers existed under the Empire; but a powerful and settled Government, with all the resources of an elaborate administrative machinery at its command, can destroy these perils in the bud, and prevent their ever assuming the most formidable proportions. All that had now been lost, and the consequences were not slow in coming. With a shattered and inefficient police, with a feeble and newly-recruited army, and with a Government which did not know its own mind, and was compelled, by the very laws of its existence, to flatter and defer to the mob, what wonder is it that France was stricken by the assassin's hand, and saw the establishment of that

Republic which takes pillage as its leading principle, and blazons its banners with the hues of murder?

The aspect of the streets on the Sunday was very remarkable. The building of barricades had been going on by torchlight during the night, and it was still proceeding. Every man who passed by one of these erections before it was finished was compelled to dig up a paving-stone, and add it to the heap. Montmartre had by this time become a strong military position, and no civilian was allowed to enter that quarter. Gangs of men were busy throwing up earthworks and constructing batteries. Large bodies of National Guards stood about; and the neighbouring streets were commanded by mitrailleuses. Occasionally a band of citizen soldiers and professional fighting men, mostly half-drunk, would come surging along the Boulevards with a triumphant swagger, shouting the usual exclamations, or singing indecent songs, most of which had some scornful allusion to the Emperor Napoleon. At other times, a wretched *sergent de ville* would be hunted by the mob, and nearly if not quite killed. Yet a large number of mere sight-seers were about the streets, and their appearance was that of holiday folks amusing themselves, and in the highest spirits. "The insurgents themselves," said a writer in the *Daily News*, "hardly knew what to make of it all. Their barricades were invaded by shop-girls and whole families, who crowded up to look at them, attracted by the bright sun. The people walking about—peaceful citizens with their families in Sunday clothes—destroyed in a great measure the threatening aspect of the revolution." Now and then, however, an alarm occurred. At three o'clock in the afternoon, the National Guards protecting the barricades in the Place Clichy suddenly exclaimed, "To arms! to arms! The Line are coming!" It proved to be a false rumour; but, before the mistake could be discovered, great numbers of women and children had been thrown into agonies of terror by finding themselves blocked at every turn by a barricade, and expecting each moment to hear the noise of musketry.

So the Sunday passed in Paris. At Versailles all was consternation. It was feared that the insurgents would soon make their appearance there also, and rumours that they were in full march for the town became rife. A preposterous opinion, that the insurrection in Paris had been brought about by the Buonapartists for their own purposes, found credence for a time, and people said that very shortly the Prussians would be seen re-entering Paris, and establishing order with the Emperor Napoleon as their nominee. The Berlin Government did indeed provisionally stop all movements of troops which had been commenced since the signature of the Preliminaries of Peace; but this was the natural result of a fear lest the Red Republican faction should renew the war, in accordance with opinions on the subject which they had always expressed. By a singular coincidence, M. Rouher, one of the most eminent of the Imperial Ministers, arrived in France about this time, and on the 19th of March was arrested at his hotel at Boulogne, and removed thence to prison in a cab, in the custody of ten National Guards and the Sub-Prefect. He was hooted by a mob, which stopped the cab and endeavoured to drag him out. Upon this he very courageously alighted, and, protected by a number of Republicans, gained the Palace of Justice, after a narrow escape of being torn to pieces. In this gallant exploit of baiting an unarmed man the Boulogne fishwomen distinguished themselves greatly. They tore the hair from off M. Rouher's head, and retired covered with glory, and with the proud consciousness of having served the Republic.

In the course of Sunday, the 19th, proclamations were issued at Versailles, addressed to the Prefects, Generals, Procurators-General, and Mayors of France, and likewise to the people at large, announcing that the Government sitting at Versailles was the only one legally established; that all the Ministers had gathered there around the Chief of the Executive Power and the Assembly; that, consequently, any persons giving in their support to the insurrectionary Government would be looked upon as rebels; that 40,000 soldiers were concentrated at Versailles in good order, under the command of General Vinoy; and that these men would be quartered on the inhabitants, who were requested to receive them well, and to give them as many facilities as possible. An attempt at compromise was made by some of the extreme Republicans of the National Assembly, who on the 20th of March issued the following manifesto, which was posted up in the streets of Paris:—

"Citizens,—Actuated by the absolute necessity of saving Paris and the Republic, and of avoiding all cause of collision, and convinced that the best way to achieve that supreme result is to satisfy the legitimate wishes of the people, we have resolved to ask to-day the National Assembly to adopt two measures, which we hope, if adopted, will contribute to restore tranquillity to your minds. These two measures are the election of all chiefs in the National Guard, and the creation of a Municipal Council, elected by all the citizens. What we desire, and what is necessary for the public good in all cases, and more than ever in the

present circumstances, is order in liberty and by liberty. Long live France! Long live the Republic!

(Signed) "LOUIS BLANC, SCHŒLCHER, WEYRAT, ADAM, FLOQUET, BERNARD, LANGLOIS, LOCKROY, LAREY, BRISSON, GREPPO, MILLIÈRE; also by the Mayor and Adjoint of the 18th Arrondissement."

The Mayor whose signature stands at the foot of this document—M. Clémenceau—was one of the deputies for Paris, and, although now to some extent making common cause with the insurrection, was apparently desirous of coming to a pacific understanding with Versailles. At all these extraordinary phenomena, middle-class Paris looked on helplessly in a kind of stupor—certainly not approving, yet afraid to take any active steps for putting down the communistical outbreak. The most serious fact for the Government of M. Thiers was the tacit refusal of even the loyal National Guards to answer the summons of the authorities to come forward and crush the rebels of Montmartre and Belleville. They wished well to the moderate Republic, but they had no love for M. Thiers and his colleagues. The reason of this appears to have been twofold. They are said to have been annoyed at the appointment to the two chief military commands in Paris of Generals Vinoy and d'Aurelles de Paladines—officers connected with the disasters and miseries of the war; and those who belonged to the trading classes felt themselves greatly aggrieved by the financial policy of the Government. An Act relating to bills of exchange had been passed just before the Chamber left Bordeaux, which was regarded by Parisian merchants and men of business as prejudicial to their interests, and against which they had earnestly appealed, but in vain. All the trading classes, therefore, were in an angry mood with M. Thiers when, on the 18th of March, he summoned them, together with the Line regiments, to march against the Red Republicans. Very few obeyed. The 106th Battalion, which did so much towards saving the Government of General Trochu on the 31st of October, now contributed only 300 men out of 1,200. It was the same with other battalions. The National Guards who did not belong to the extreme factions refrained from joining the insurrectionary movement; but they did not do anything towards suppressing it. They stayed at home and awaited the issue. This may have been imprudent, unpatriotic, and spiteful; but it suffices to show how little hold M. Thiers had been able to obtain on the population of the capital.

The Government, however, received a very general support in the provinces; and it was resolved that the unity of the country should be maintained. The same feeling was strongly manifested in the National Assembly in its primary sitting at Versailles on the 20th of March. The first step taken was to appoint a committee of fifteen members "to support the Government in all necessary measures"—a motion carried without a dissentient voice. M. Picard, Minister of Finance in the late Government of the National Defence, and now Minister of the Interior, proposed to declare the department of the Seine-et-Oise in a state of siege; which was also done. M. Clémenceau then moved as urgent a Bill signed by MM. Louis Blanc, Peyrat, Millière, and several other members for Paris, decreeing municipal elections in the capital. There were to be eighty municipal councillors elected, who were to choose a Mayor. M. Picard at first opposed the urgency, on the ground that it would imply a compromise with the insurrection; but ultimately he gave way, and urgency was voted. The same course was taken respecting a Bill, presented by M. Millière, for repealing the Act relating to bills of exchange to which allusion has already been made, and for giving more extended time for the payment of those bills. In the course of the discussion on the State of Siege Bill, M. Louis Blanc, amidst many interruptions, protested against taking any such step, which he said would be of no use whatever, and might provoke resistance. The danger, he argued, was greater than they thought, and conciliation was now the only policy. At the same time he severely condemned the assassination of the two generals; and in this he was followed by Messrs. Clémenceau and Langlois. General Trochu said that the state of siege was a measure, not of force, but of protection; and he produced a great effect on the House by pronouncing an eloquent funeral oration on Generals Thomas and Lecomte.

Another sitting of the Assembly took place on the 21st, when it was resolved that General Lecomte's six children should be adopted by the State, and that the deaths of the two murdered officers should be declared a cause of public mourning. A long discussion then followed on the report of the committee appointed the day before for considering what measures should be taken in the existing crisis. The report really amounted to nothing more than a verbose declaration of the committee to support M. Thiers; but it led to some expressions of anti-Republican feeling on the part of the majority, which of course provoked counter-demonstrations from the Left.

M. Schœlcher moved that Admiral Saisset, who had been appointed General of the Paris National Guard, in place of d'Aurelles de Paladines, should on the following day review that force in the Champs Elysées, first issuing a proclamation to say that every one coming to the review would by so doing protest against the "scoundrels" at the Hôtel de Ville who called themselves a Government. He was persuaded that 200,000 National Guards would at once flock to his standard. Admiral Saisset himself, however, showed by an appeal to facts how baseless was this view. He related that when appointed, two days before, to the command of the National Guards, he had hoped to get possession of the Elysée and the Ministry of the Interior for his head-quarters, and had calculated that with two battalions he could have held the position; but he could not collect more than a few hundred men. M. Schœlcher somewhat relieved the mind of the Assembly with respect to General Chanzy by stating that he and M. Clémenceau had, at great personal risk, been to the Hôtel de Ville to ask for the release of that officer, and that the Revolutionary Committee had promised that he would be set at liberty after the communal elections had been held. One of the most important speeches of the sitting was that of M. Jules Favre, who pronounced strongly against the doctrine of the Republic being superior to universal suffrage; said he repented of having preserved their arms to the National Guards at the period of the armistice, when the enemy threatened to take them away; and stated that the Prussians were at that moment diplomatically asking him whether, if the insurrection prevailed in Paris, they would not have the right to repress it. M. Thiers spoke several times, and attempted to curry favour with the extreme party in Paris by promising a Municipal Council for the capital—a concession which, had it come earlier, might have averted the terrible collision. He also promised that under no circumstances would he send an armed force to attack Paris, but would wait patiently, in the belief that the calm attitude of the Assembly, supported by all France, would in time pacify the rebellion.* Subsequent events give a strange look of insincerity to this declaration.

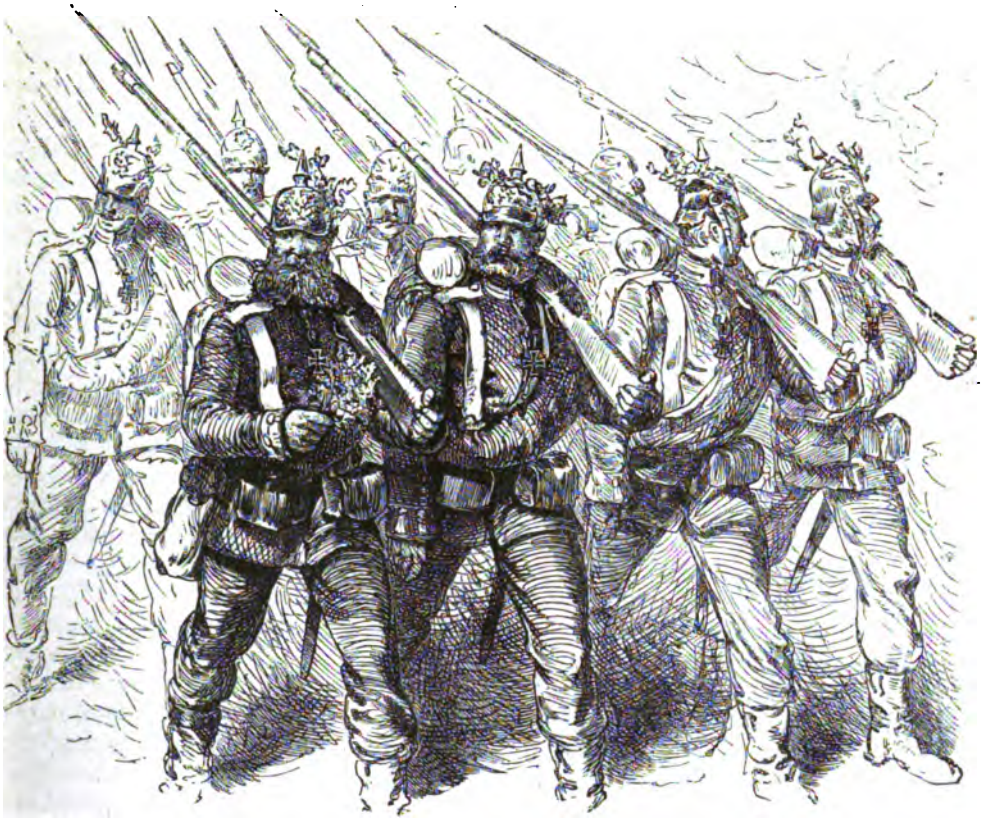
The order-loving part of the Parisian population began to show some signs of returning spirit on the 20th. Reactionary crowds assembled in the streets. The Central Committee was denounced as a rabble of assassins; and at night it was found necessary to disperse these gatherings by the action of bodies of National Guards from Montmartre and Belleville. The middle and upper classes of the city had undoubtedly abundant cause for regarding the new authorities with dread and abhorrence. The Red Republicans had inaugurated their rule by an act of cold-blooded assassination. It is true that the new authorities disclaimed that act; but they justified while disavowing it, and, although the murderers must have been perfectly well known to them (for they were all acting in concert in the same building at the time), no attempt was ever made to bring them to punishment. If, therefore, the principle holds good, that the accomplice in a murder is as guilty as the actual murderer, it is impossible for the members of the Committee to escape responsibility before history for those atrocious deeds. In other respects the new governing Power gave evidence of its disposition to follow an extreme revolutionary course. The all-important question of money promptly demanded consideration. No funds were found in the Treasury; and, as the National Guards would soon have chosen other rulers had they been left without their pay, heavy requisitions were at once made on the prosperous. Tradesmen were forced to take in payment paper issued by the insurgent authorities. It was announced that, although the Committee would respect the conditions of peace, they held that the greater portion of the indemnity should be paid by the authors of the war, by whom they meant the moneyed classes, though it is well known that the most frantic supporters of the war in July, 1870, were the lower orders of Paris. Acts of pillage were soon added to acts of assassination. In the course of Monday, the 20th, a large house in the Avenue d'Eylau was sacked; and in one of the central streets of Paris a baker's shop was broken into, and the bread carried off. The office of the *Figaro* newspaper was violently entered, and the types and presses destroyed, because the journal did not support the revolution; and the *Gaulois* was suppressed on account of its Buonapartist leanings. The Reign of Terror had commenced, and, in the name of Liberty, no one was free to express his dissent.

Alarmed at the prospect before them, hundreds of the respectable classes quitted Paris in hot haste; but an order was issued, prohibiting hotel-keepers from allowing their lodgers to leave until permission should be granted. Paris was by this time completely isolated. All the telegraphic wires communicating between the capital and the departments were cut by order of the Government at Versailles—an act which the Central Committee denounced as a criminal proceeding; and the

* *Daily News* correspondent.



A FUNERAL DURING THE SIEGE.



THE EMPEROR'S GUARDS ENTERING BERLIN.

revolution was thus shut up within the sphere of its birth. Versailles was strongly fortified against any possible attack; the number of troops was augmented from day to day; and, in spite of the assurances of M. Thiers, it was obvious that the country was on the eve of civil war.

CHAPTER XXV.

The Secret Action of the Red Republicans—Secret Societies of Former Times—The International Society—Connection between the International and the Commune—Objects and Character of the Former—Its Rise and Development—Negotiations between the International and the Imperial French Government—Extreme Revolutionary Views—Manifesto of the International Society—Changes in the Composition and Objects of the International—Michael Bakounine, "the Russian Savage"—Ultra Revolutionary Views—Split between the English and Foreign Members—Cluseret's Design for the Destruction of Paris—Atheism of the International—Community of Property—Projects and Dreams—Numbers and Present Condition of the Internationalists—Plausible Arguments in Favour of the Red Republic—Imperfectibility of our Race—Seifishness of the Communistical Agitation—Various Statements of the Aims of the Revolution—Imaginary Utopias—Communists and Cannibals.

NOT only France, but the whole civilised world, was startled and dismayed by the sudden success of the Red Republicans of Paris. The most extraordinary, and perhaps the most alarming, feature of the movement, was the fact that it had been brought about by men nearly all of whom were totally unknown to society at large. It was not, therefore, the influence, whether for good or evil, of a few great names which might be supposed to exercise a species of enchantment on the uneducated classes, and to be capable of moving them, almost without thought, towards the execution of any design which the master-minds might have determined on—it was not this which had caused the convulsion. The outbreak was clearly due less to individual persuasion, which in the nature of

things is evanescent, than to the operation of deep-rooted principles, such as survive when men depart. The ideas which gave rise to the Commune were within the cognisance of the middle and upper classes of society; but it was not supposed that they had attained such power, or were capable of such organised action. A frightful apparition of the Red Republic had been momentarily visible in June, 1848; but it was at once exorcised by the cannon and bayonets of Cavaignac. It was again apprehended towards the close of 1851, and would probably have made itself once more manifest, had not the *coup d'état* of Louis Napoleon prevented any such movement, not only at that time, but for several years to come. Every now and then during the period of the Second Empire, threatenings of this vague yet appalling danger came and went; but the admirable organisation of the Imperial Government kept the enemies of social order in subjection, though only by a resort to means regrettable in themselves, against which the Moderate Republicans were perpetually directing their most bitter attacks, little thinking that they would soon be obliged to use the same weapons with still greater severity. Nevertheless, although the Emperor Napoleon held the Red Republic firmly down throughout his term of power, the principles of the extreme faction were working beneath the surface; and they only awaited the advent of a weaker Government, and of a period of social disruption, to glare upon the world with stormy menace.

The influence of secret societies is no new fact, but, on the contrary, one of the oldest facts of which history takes notice. Ancient Egypt, in days before the very dawn of Grecian civilisation, was largely affected by mysterious confederations, professing to teach an occult morality and a transcendental faith. The same kind of associations existed in China from the earliest times; they were found in Persia and in Hindostan; Pythagoras established a secret society at Crotona, in Southern Italy; and the old worship of Isis, originating in the land of the Pyramids, spread like a masked and subtle poison throughout the whole extent of the Roman Empire, though frequently forbidden and proscribed. The early Christian ages abounded in these muffled organisations for the promotion of particular views; while Mohammedan countries were afflicted with bodies such as the Assassins and the Thugs. In the Middle Ages there were the various brotherhoods of military knights, the Rosicrucians and similar mystical fraternities, and the terrible Vehmgerichte of Germany, a secret association for the trial of offences and the punishment of ill-doers, which, irregular though it was, came at length to be regarded as a legal tribunal, to which the Emperors themselves paid great respect. More tremendous than any, perhaps, was the Inquisition, which exercised a spiritual despotism of the most frightful and irresponsible character. The present century has seen the more or less successful action in Italy of political bodies like the Carbonari and the Adelfia, operating by concealed methods on the government of the country; as well as the organised system of confiscation, enforced by murder, which the infamous Camorristi were enabled to set in force under the Bourbon rule at Naples. The Masonic societies, and the various Trade Union bodies, are secret associations existing amongst us at this day; and it may safely be said that wherever any elaborate form of civilisation has been reached, there will certain sections of society band themselves together, under rules and conditions not known to the uninitiated, for purposes of self-protection, or aggression, or both. In ancient times, however, these associations had generally some exalted or metaphysical end in view, though the mysticism not unfrequently degenerated into the grossest sensuality. Our own days are more practical and prosaic; and the modern secret society is commonly a league for dethroning Kings and Emperors, for putting down churches, for raising the rate of wages, for abolishing capital, or for inaugurating some Communistical Utopia, which shall at once annihilate affluence on the one hand and pauperism on the other.

The Communistical Republic of Paris, established for a brief space in the spring of 1871, was the product of a secret organisation which appears to have been in alliance with another secret, or partially secret, society, consisting of representatives of the working classes of Europe, and called "The International Association." The precise degree of connection existing between the Communistical leaders of Paris and this body is involved in a good deal of mystery; but that there was a connection of some kind is certain. Several of the most prominent members of the Commune during its brief and troubled life were also members of the International. As early as the 23rd of March—that is, only five days after the outbreak which led up to the Red Republic—the International Association issued an address to the working classes in which it was said:—"The division of interests has caused general ruin, and has engendered a social war: it is to liberty, equality, and community that you must look to secure order upon new bases, and to reorganise labour, which is its first condition.

Workmen, the communal revolution affirms these principles, and arrests all cause of conflict in the future. Will you hesitate to give it your final sanction?" Moreover, the International, shortly after the fall of the Commune, published a manifesto approving of its policy, and even justifying the acts of assassination by which its reign had been disgraced. This formidable society of the workmen of Europe was founded in the autumn of 1864 at a meeting in London, and took for its basis the principles of the Trades Unions. It was the conception of two Parisian workmen, named Tolain and Fribourg, who, having visited the London Exhibition of 1862, and associated with English artisans, were led to turn their thoughts towards an improvement in the condition of their order. They revisited London from time to time, and it was here that their project was first brought into practical existence. At first, the association did not affect any political views, but these were not long in coming. The original president, vice-president, and secretary, were three English workmen, well-known in connection with socialist agitations—Messrs. Odger, Cremer, and Wheeler. Afterwards, a number of foreign refugees obtained the ruling influence in the society, the principles of which thenceforward became more extreme. Still, the head-quarters of the association continued to be in London, because there are few Continental States where such bodies are not against the law; but branches were established, by an evasion of the law, in various foreign cities, especially in Paris, and the French element became predominant.

Mr. Baillie Cochrane, speaking on the subject of the International in the House of Commons on the 12th of April, 1872, said:—"It was from London that the orders were sent to burn Paris. A M. Eugène Dupont came over, and declared the creed of the society. He also spoke at the Congress at Brussels in 1868. He said there, 'We want no Governments; Governments crush us with taxation.' Another speaker, a Russian, said, 'We want no religion, no marriage, none of the institutions of an effete civilisation.' The society expressing such sentiments had its publications, which were scattered broadcast over the world. According to M. Eugène Dupont, England contained all the elements of social revolution except revolutionary ardour. Ireland, however, was ripe, and there the initiatory blow must be struck. These publications were signed by all the officers of the society in London. The burning of Paris was defended as an expedient of military strategy; and tracts containing such doctrines were translated into French, Italian, and Spanish. The first manifesto of the society was signed by Messrs. Odger and Lucraft; but when those gentlemen saw it in print, they repudiated its doctrines. A meeting was held between the leaders of the International and the Commune before the burning of Paris, and the decree of the Commune for the destruction of the Column in the Place Vendôme received the sanction of the International." The great Italian agitator, Mazzini, despite the extreme views which he held, strongly disapproved of the International Society, and shortly before his death warned Italian workmen against it. Garibaldi, on the other hand, gave it a certain degree of support, though as disinclined as any man to sanction the atrocities of the Commune. What at first sight seems more remarkable is the fact that, in the earlier years of its existence, the International was to some extent countenanced by the Imperial Government of France. This, however, may be easily explained. Napoleon III. always appealed to the democracy for the bases of his power. The organisation of labour, with a view to an amelioration of the condition of the working classes, was one of the many "ideas" by which he hoped to influence the masses in his favour. He soon perceived that the new association was likely to become a formidable power, and he made some advances towards obtaining it as an ally. Shortly after the first general meeting of the society at Geneva in 1866, M. Rouher, then the Chief Minister of the Empire, sought an interview with one of its members, and promised to allow a memoir, read in the Swiss city, and containing a declaration of principles, to circulate in France, if certain modifications were made, and the Emperor were recognised and thanked for his services to working men. This being refused, the memoir was not allowed to pass the frontiers; but for some time a sort of distant civility existed between the Internationalists in France and the Imperial Government. It is certain that the Moderate Republicans, and even some of the more extreme leaders of the same party, were bitterly opposed to the new society, because it avowedly disregarded purely political for purely social speculations. This was a gain to the Government, inasmuch as it divided and thus weakened the opposition.* The International, moreover, was averse to strikes among working men—always very dangerous convulsions in a State. Its disapproval of these organised efforts to raise the rate of wages—a disapproval which led to considerable disagreements between the foreign and English members,

* "Secret History of the International Working Men's Association," by Onslow Yorke. London, 1872.

the latter of whom were in favour of strikes—arose from no feeling of sympathy with capitalists, but from a conviction that all such movements were a waste of that energy which should be devoted to the bringing about of a social state wherein wages should be abolished, and the produce of labour be shared entirely by the labourers. When the English members of the body desired their Parisian brethren to join them in a strike, the latter refused, saying, "Why should we give ourselves any trouble about raising the rate of wages, when we are just on the eve of suppressing wages altogether, and becoming our own employers?" Views so extreme as this were not feared by the Empire, and it seems probable that the Government of that day thought to disarm the International by adopting some of the more moderate of its ideas, and giving to its own policy an increasing tendency to social reform.

Such a course appeared all the easier, on account of the International, in its earlier days, professing not to concern itself with political forms. This, however, was to a great extent a piece of self-delusion. Where changes of so radical a character are proposed, politics cannot be excluded; and a preference for the Republican method of government was the natural consequence of the social opinions held by the Internationalists, since Monarchy would necessarily be distrusted, as giving too much power and grandeur to one man, and as being too closely associated with the old ideas of upper-class predominance. Still, there can be no question that the main design was social. A writer in the issue for 1872 of "The People's Almanack"—an organ of the International Society—remarked:—"The business of the International is political, but only in the sense of destroying all that is political. It must destroy all existing institutions—State, Church, banks, armies, and police. We must overturn these institutions throughout the world." And the passage went on to say that the masses must be organised to crush to atoms all military and civil opposition. Another member of the society said that there was nothing in common between the Liberals of the bourgeoisie and the International; that it mattered not to them whether Thiers or Gambetta was in power; that their business was with the Propaganda; that they would not make a bloody war till they were forced, but that they would continue the struggle for the destruction of society.* A manifesto of the General Council of the Association in London thus sets forth its principles:—

"CONSIDERING,

"That the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves; that the struggle for the emancipation of the working classes means, not a struggle for class privileges and monopolies, but for equal rights and duties, and the abolition of all class rule;

"That the economical subjection of the man of labour to the monopoliser of the means of labour—that is, the sources of life—lies at the bottom of servitude in all its forms, of all social misery, mental degradation, and political dependence;

"That the economical emancipation of the working classes is therefore the great end to which every political movement ought to be subordinate as a means;

"That all efforts aiming at that great end have hitherto failed from the want of solidarity between the manifold divisions of labour in each country, and from the absence of a fraternal bond of union between the working classes of different countries;

"That the emancipation of labour is neither a local nor a national, but a social problem, embracing all countries in which modern society exists, and depending for its solution on the concurrence, practical and theoretical, of the most advanced countries;

"That the present revival of the working classes in the most industrious countries of Europe, while it raises a new hope, gives a solemn warning against a relapse into the old errors, and calls for the immediate combination of the still disconnected movements;

"FOR THESE REASONS,

"The International Working Men's Association has been founded."

As already stated, the International Society had altered very greatly, both in its composition and its objects, since its establishment in the latter part of 1864. At first it consisted entirely of actual working men; but, as the foreign element flowed in, a great number of professed agitators, literary men, journalists, and dreamy theorisers, connected themselves with the body, and became its ruling spirits. The consequence of this was that the designs of the Association grew more vast, vague, inclusive, and revolutionary. The main purpose of the English members, and of their earliest foreign colleagues, was to advance the price of labour by a combination of all the workmen of Europe, so that when the masters in any country were threatened with a strike, they should be unable to get workmen in other countries, by whose assistance they might beat down the wages of the native artisan. The French, German, and other Continental revolutionists who afterwards joined the federation were bent on a complete reconstruction of society, and they soon acquired the upper hand. But even among these there were successive phases of opinion. The socialist view which excluded politics was succeeded by the socialism which was also poli-

* Speech of Mr. Eastwick in the House of Commons, April 12th, 1872.

tical. One of the new ruling geniuses of the International was a Russian named Michael Bakounine, who has been described by Mr. Onslow Yorke, in his "Secret History of the International," as "an open Nihilist; a man who makes a creed of pure negation, denying everything — religion, virtue, history, man, and God. He avows himself an atheist. He is an enemy of private property in land. He is said to hold the marriage bond in high contempt. He hates all forms of law, all claims of power." This man, who is a thorough citizen of the world, and has been in many countries, delights in calling himself "the Russian Savage." He and a number of others holding similar views, established at Berne, some years ago, a small society entitled "The International Alliance of the Socialist Democracy," which stated in its programme:—"The Alliance declares itself atheist. It seeks the abolition of all creeds; the substitution of science for faith, and of human justice for divine. It seeks before all things to equalise classes and individuals of both sexes. It declares that all property should be held in common, and that all children should be fed, clothed, and taught in the same manner. It supports the cause of labour against capital. It repudiates all idea of patriotism and nationality in favour of the Universal Democracy." The London Council of the International Association was persuaded by a Franco-German Jew, named Karl Marx, and by other foreigners, to allow the new Swiss Alliance to become a branch of the International; and six weeks afterwards, M. Vésinier, secretary of the French section of that Association in London, and an author of some name, called a meeting to denounce the moderate men, and to declare the International a political body, and a forerunner of the Red Republic and the Commune. At a subsequent general meeting at Basle, a resolution in favour of the abolition of private property was carried, on the motion of Bakounine; the office of president of the society was put down, and Mr. Odger, together with the rest of his countrymen, thenceforth ceased to be of any account.* Messrs. Odger and Lucraft withdrew from the General Council after the close of the communal insurrection in Paris, because they did not approve of the address in vindication of the insurgents, to which their signatures had been attached under a misapprehension.

When M. Rouher found he could not come to terms with the earlier members of the International, he took proceedings against them, and the Paris branch was dissolved by a legal sentence; but it was revived under the Administration of M. Ollivier, though in defiance of the law. About the same time, a French member of the English council—M. Eugène Dupont—planned a social revolution, to be commenced in Ireland, and thence brought over to England; and one of the French members residing in Paris—Varlin by name—corresponded with Cluseret, a Frenchman naturalised in America, as to the best way of setting up the Commune on the banks of the Seine. Cluseret was to be the chief general of the revolutionary army; and in writing to Varlin from New York, on the 17th of February, 1870, he observed:—"You say success is certain. So it is if we prepare the ground beforehand. When the day arrives, we shall be ready; physically as well as morally ready. When that day shall come, it will be either us or nothing. Paris will be ours, or Paris will have ceased to be."* All these men were subsequently members of the Communistical Government; and, if other proof were wanting, it would be sufficiently shown, by this passage in Cluseret's letter to Varlin, that the burning of Paris was deliberately performed in fulfilment of a settled design. It required, however, the previous establishment of an imbecile Moderate Republic, and the disruption of society by an exhausting and disastrous war, to give the incendiaries their chance. The Empire quelled the attempted revolutions of 1869 and 1870 with the greatest ease.

Among other extreme demands put forward by the later Internationalists were the abolition of marriage, so far as it is a political, religious, juridical, or civil institution; and the abolition of the right of inheritance, "so that in the future the enjoyments of each man shall correspond exactly with his production." Nothing was more remarkable in these men than their passionate opposition, not only to the orthodox and traditional forms of religion, but to the simplest elements of any belief whatever. "The people of Paris," writes a literary English Communist (Mr. Frederic Harrison), "believe not in any God or any man. But they have a religion of their own; and for that religion they are prepared to die. That religion is the faith that capital and its holders must adapt themselves to nobler uses, or they had better cease to exist." M. Dupont, the President of the Congress of Brussels, said, "We will have no more religions, for religions stifle intelligence;" another authority laid it down as an axiom that "three scourges exist in perpetuity, to prey upon the productions of

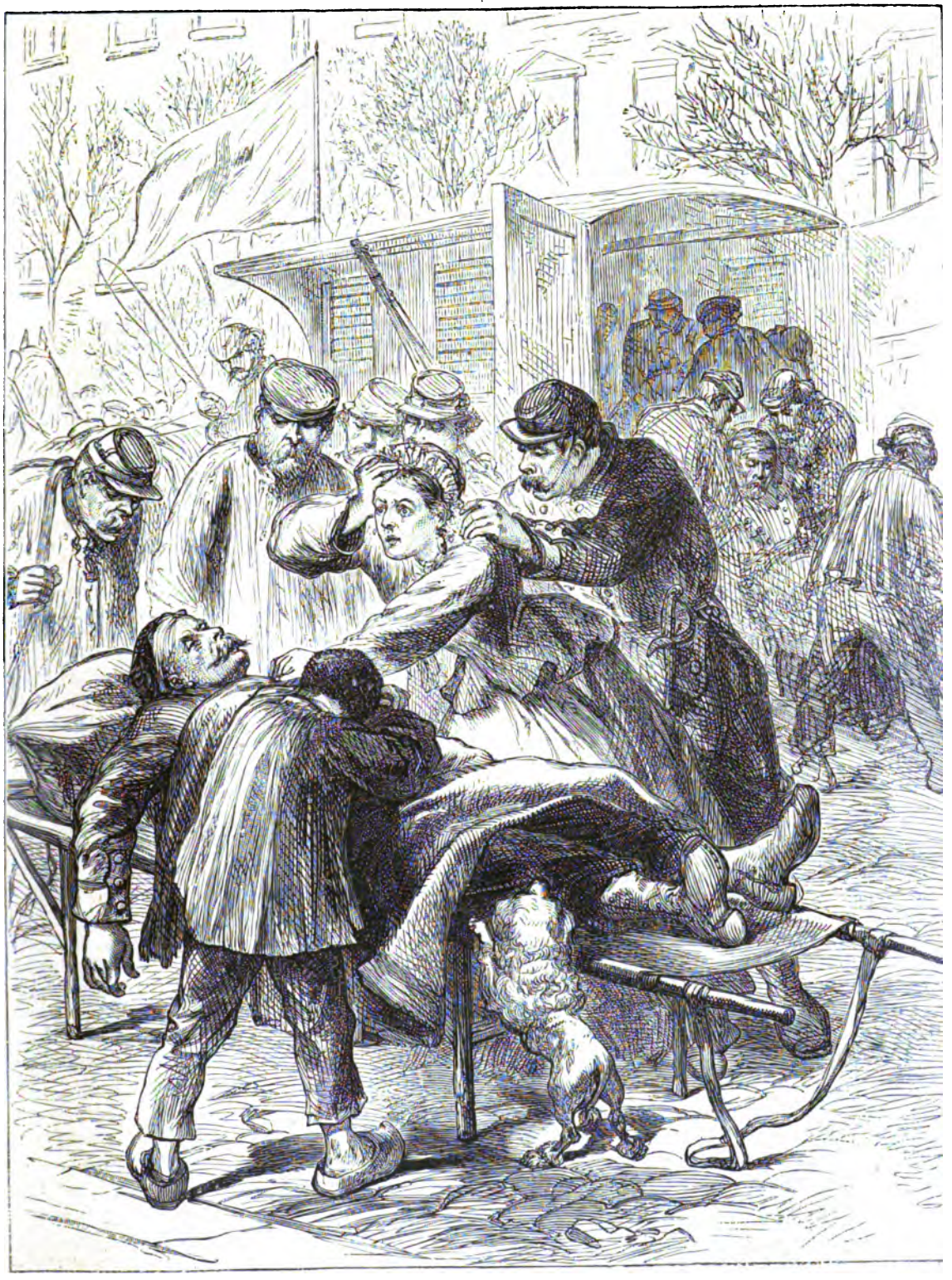
* These facts are repeated from Mr. Onslow Yorke's book. They would have told a clearer story, and possessed a greater interest, had the respective dates been given.

* "Secret History of the International," &c., p. 165.



MONSEIGNEUR DARBOY, ARCHBISHOP OF PARIS.

humanity—the priest, the soldier, and the fund-holder;" while a third declared that out of atheism there was no hope for man, as, unless people professed this negative creed, they would be the property of despots. But of course the greatest of all the objects which the Internationalists hope to attain—that to which the others stand somewhat in the position of accessories—is the destruction of personal property, and the division of the possessions of the wealthy among the poor. The landlord



"DEAD!"

is no more sacred in their eyes than the capitalist. One of the resolutions adopted at the Congress of Basle ran :—"Society has a right to abolish individual ownership of the soil; and it is necessary that the ownership of the soil should be resumed by the community." All mines, quarries, railways, canals, telegraphs, coal-mines, machines, and other instruments of labour, are to be equally held in common. In the meanwhile, no employer is to use a machine unless he first compensate all the workmen whom it may displace. "The landlords," says an address of the General Council of the International Society, "are the more remote, the capitalists the more direct, antagonists of the working men." In other writings of the same body and its supporters occur such phrases as—"All middle-class politics, whatever their colour or their name, have at bottom but one object—the maintenance of middle-class domination; and middle-class domination is the slavery of the proletariat;" —"The law gives to the capitalist the right to reduce the proletaire to slavery by famine;"—"In truth, we see everywhere capital ruling, speculating, warring, against the workman. The capitalists of to-day are the successors of the slave-owners of ancient times, and of the feudal lords of the middle ages." A valuable article in the *Quarterly Review* for October, 1871, reproduces these and other utterances of the social revolutionists, and continues :—

"The ultimate objects of the movement are stated with abundant clearness. They amount simply to this: that the workmen shall have land without buying it, capital without accumulating it, machinery and the instruments of labour without paying for them. But when we come to inquire into the measures by which these beneficent ends are to be accomplished, their language loses its precision. We get nothing but a haze of declamation. The only step proposed by them which can be called practical is the entire abolition of the right of inheritance. No human being is to be allowed to inherit, or receive by bequest, anything from any other human being. 'If,' says M. Richard, 'parents more active and more intelligent than others, and who had amassed some fortune, were allowed to set up a special privilege in favour of their children by bequeathing this fortune to them, solidarity would be struck at in the very heart.' This is the general tone of the writers in socialist newspapers. It embodies much the same feeling as that which has dictated the common trades union rule that a good workman is not to be allowed to take any advantage of his clumsier neighbour by doing more work within the same time. The literary men, however, of any movement are usually more thoroughgoing than the silent members who are less accustomed to generalise; and this proposal to forbid all inheritance does not yet receive unanimous support. At the Congress of Basle it was carried by a large majority of those who voted; but a considerable number abstained from voting. M. Eccarius, one of the gentlemen with a foreign name who represented England, advanced Mr. Lowe's proposal of an increased succession duty as a kind of middle term. But the suggestion met with little favour, and was rejected by a large majority. The proposal, however, to abolish inheritances is very dear to the hearts of the leading men. It seems to them to be the most feasible way of attaining their object, the prevention of individual accumulation. Even to their fevered brains the chance of wresting from every individual all that he has contrived to earn may seem precarious; but at all events they think they can prevail over the dead hand. Yet they are aware that natural affection, and in fact the very existence of the family, would interpose a serious obstacle even to this mitigated robbery. Accordingly they find themselves forced to declare war against the family, and, as a necessary consequence, against religion altogether. At first sight it appears inexplicable that they should have gone out of their way to array against them the vast social force which religion still happily represents. As regards the rougher and more brutal instruments, no explanation is necessary. The lust for plunder and hatred of the name of God are emotions of the same order, and are apt, where there is temptation, to go together. But some of the thinkers, or rather dreamers, who are the informing spirits of the movement, are men of pure morality, and at least flatter themselves that they are in pursuit of a high philanthropical ideal. They have convinced themselves, by some strange process of reasoning, that individual accumulation is the source of all human ills; and they see plainly enough that natural affection, the product of the family life, leads inevitably to accumulation. Consequently, with the remorseless logic of theoretical politicians, they declare war against the family and the religion that supports it."

The power wielded by this extraordinary association was unquestionably very great. It had its ramifications all over the civilised globe, and its followers were to be counted by tens of thousands. The precise number is not authentically stated, and doubtless it varied from day to day; but the lowest computation amounted to 90,000. Mr. Baillie Cochrane, in the Parliamentary speech already alluded to, spoke of 180,000. The French Procureur Impérial, in the course of a trial in June, 1870, assumed that the entire number of the Internationalists at that time was about 800,000, of whom a tenth part, he said, belonged to this country. Writers on the side of the International lay claim to a total, in England and America, of five or even seven millions. The latter statements are probably exaggerations; but it is certain that the numbers are very considerable. As the total revenue of the working classes is immense (it

has even been set down at 300,000,000*l.* in this country alone), and as working men are never behindhand in furnishing money for the support of their principles and supposed interests, there was a reasonable presumption that the International was in no want of funds. On the Continent some twenty newspapers advocated its cause; in England, two or three. It is probable that numerous members of the society—especially in Great Britain—repudiate the extreme doctrines of the ultra-revolutionists, and adhere rather to the original objects of the confederation; but, unfortunately, it is the most dangerous men who are the most influential. So threatening did this obscure organisation appear to the Continental Governments, that by many it was entirely proscribed; and this was the case even in one of the Swiss cantons. The fact, indeed, is not to be wondered at. The International had itself thrown down the gauntlet. It had declared war to the uttermost against every existing Government, and every form of society that has at any time been known to civilised man. The Paris Commune of 1871 has proved what it is capable of doing, and what it desires to do. The case does not admit of reconciliation or compromise; and we can hardly blame the Governments of those countries which are the most imperilled, if they refuse hospitality to the assassin, the incendiary, and the brigand.

The main safeguard against these dangerous views is in their very excess, and in the crimes with which they were allied during the brief reign of Communism in Paris; though it cannot be denied that, with a certain order of minds, extravagance of doctrine and atrocity of act are absolutely attractive. The great danger to society lies in the measure of justification for their wildest theories which the Communists are enabled to find in society itself. The terrible problem of poverty yet accuses our imperfect civilisation, and outrages the moral sense of all who are not lapped in sloth or lost in selfishness. The shadow of hunger lies black on all the golden porticoes of our wealth; and by the side of the too rich are the too needy. It is vain to say that this has always been the case, and that to insist on such obvious contrasts is a trite device of rhetoric. The observation is trite because the fact is so; and the continuance of the fact, under all the modifications of society that have taken place in many succeeding centuries, furnishes the revolutionists with a plausible argument for breaking with the past altogether, and beginning an entirely new social order, in which there shall be no gilded drones and no squalid outcasts. A theory of government apparently founded on principles of natural justice, and of compassion for the suffering, appeals very powerfully to the youthful, the enthusiastic, the speculative, and the dreamy. It appeals even to some of the best emotions of our nature. Why, asks the passionate reasoner, shocked at seeing some report of death from want of food, or at contemplating the terrible inequalities of fortune—why are these indolent rich men to monopolise eternally the graces, the charms, and the superfluities of life, and, protected by soldiers, police, law-courts, and churches, to

> "Lie reclined
> On the hills like gods together, careless of mankind?"

Why are the masses to be perpetually doomed to produce the wealth which others enjoy, to manufacture the splendours in which others are arrayed, and, when all is done, to die like galley-slaves at the oar, or to drag out a forlorn old age in workhouse wards? These reasoners forget that evils so strongly intertwined with the fabric of human society can only be destroyed (if at all) by gradual processes, such as may supplant old growths by new. To hope to reconstruct society by sudden revolutions and arbitrary decrees is the most idle and mischievous of dreams. It would be as reasonable to endeavour to cure a sick man by cutting out some vital organ, and putting in one of artificial formation. But, argues the socialist, the whole existing order of things is selfish. The rich man thinks of nothing but his own gratification. His morality is a decent device to save appearances, and his religion a weapon for keeping the poor man in terror of challenging his oppressor's right to trample on him. Such statements are not altogether devoid of truth, though it is truth mingled with fallacy. Doubtless the hypocrisies of the world are many and grievous. Wealth has its cruel and its despicable side, and commercial morality is sometimes little better than a pretence. But these arguments are greatly overstated; and at any rate the Red Republicans have not yet given the slightest proof that their own conduct would be any the less selfish, or any the more exalted. In considering schemes of human governance, we must always allow for a large element of selfishness. The argument for supplanting the present social order by another, drawn from the fact that what now exists is tainted by self-reference, would be a powerful one if it could be shown that there is even a possibility of establishing any method of life which would not be similarly vitiated—if, in short, it could be proved that selfishness is merely the product of false systems, and not a defect of the individual himself. But no such proof is forthcoming. All history, all literature, all philosophy, all observation of human nature, conspire to teach the sad, stern

lesson of the imperfectibility of our race. No Utopia has ever yet been realised, because of that irremovable stone of stumbling. The systems proposed by extreme revolutionists are shadowed by this grand vice to the full as deeply as any they would abolish. Envy and covetousness are their leading motives, and murder is at hand to do the bidding of a shameless greed. It is not in order that the starving may be fed that these agitators would seize the property of the rich. It is that they themselves may enjoy more than they now possess. Nothing is more remarkable than the fact that it is not the very poor who join in these schemes of spoliation. The leading men, for the most part, are a few erratic members of the middle class—authors, artists, and pseudo-philosophers; and the rank-and-file belong to the great body of well-paid and well-fed artisans. In its objects the movement is a working-class speculation; and we have no evidence that the working classes are more exempt from selfishness than any other. They certainly have not the excuse of hunger and misery for desiring to appropriate the wealth of the capitalist. For the last quarter of a century they have been singularly prosperous, and their demands have increased with their prosperity. Many of those demands have been perfectly just and fair; but when it is required that the whole fabric of society shall be demolished to suit the views of a section, it is obvious that the design is the very reverse of unselfish—that it is the attempt of a minority, already powerful, to render itself supreme.

The pitiless ferocity, the total disregard for the feelings of others, with which this minority, whenever it gains the upper hand, endeavours to establish its theories, is in itself sufficient proof that the selfishness which the innovators are fond of imputing to others belongs equally to themselves. If the opinions they advocate were really just and beneficent, and calculated to promote the happiness, not merely of one class, but of the whole community, they might be safely left to make their own way without the aid of fire and sword. It is because the conspirators know that they have the majority against them, and are acting solely for their own interests, that they feel compelled to use the weapons of a tyrannous cruelty. This it is which throws so deep a stain of guilt on the tactics of the International. However extravagant its opinions may be, they are fair subjects for discussion; but the attempt to impose them violently on an unwilling world, with the penalty of death for resistance, is the last refinement of despotism and of political criminality. Of the opinions themselves it may be said that they are as old as human records. Community of goods—the absorption of the individual in the State—the unrestrained intercourse of the sexes—all these are dreams of the ancient as well as of the modern world. Plato imagined such a Republic, which was doubtless no new conception even in his time; and others have followed in the same path. In the Middle Ages there were many risings of a distinctly socialist character, both here and abroad; and they were always disgraced by the ferocity which was again apparent in the early days of the first French Republic, and in the whole career of the Commune of 1871.

Mr. Frederic Harrison, in the *Fortnightly Review* for August, 1871, states the ideas of the communists as follows:—"They say that where, in a common work, labour is no less necessary than capital, and labourers are as worthy of the profits as managers, the system by which the gross result is appropriated to capital, and under which the self-indulgence of wealth soars to yet unimagined heights, whilst the area of misery, ignorance, and exhaustion sinks ever deeper, is a system which is doomed to end." The remedy they propose, according to the same authority, is this:—"The whole social force, they say, which so long has been directed by capital in its own interest, shall be directed by workmen. The laws shall no longer be made and administered so as to handicap the labourer in the race of industry. The power of the State shall step in to neutralise competition, and to restrain the selfish abuse of capital. The land, at any rate, they say, must be resumed by the State for the benefit of the whole community, and farmed on social, and not on proprietary, bases. Ultimately, in short, the whole existence of capital, and the ordering of the lives of the community, must be subject to the will of social authority." A writer in the *Quarterly Review* relates a conversation which he had with an active member of the Paris Commune, after the suppression of that irregular Power. He was an intelligent and cultured man, but his speech so abounded in high-flown phrases that it was difficult to get from him any distinct definition of his views. At length, however, after a little cross-questioning, he thus explained his idea of the aims of the Communal insurrection:—"The artisans and poorer classes of France—*i.e.*, of Paris and the great towns—are ground down by the capitalists, their employers. They wish to reap the fruits of their own labour; they wish, in fact, to work for their own benefit, and not for that of others; they think that all capital ought to belong to the State, and be lent out on moderate interest to associations of operatives, who would thus enter into the full enjoyment

of the products of their own industry. They believe that only a Republic, of which the working classes should be the directors, would give them this result; and they know that a Republic of this sort can only be established by a revolution, and therefore they are willing to hazard everything and upset everything in the cause of such a revolution." The Communist in question did not seem to have made out, even in his own mind, the validity of the premises from which he proceeded; but his imagination was intoxicated by the grandeur of his dream. "There were to be no more idle and luxurious profligates, scandalising decent livers by their orgies; no more bloated millionaires, buying power by the corrupt use of their ill-gotten gains; no more wretched toilers, ground to the dust by hard-fisted employers, forced to labour from the cradle to the grave for the barest minimum of subsistence, scarcely knowing what true life is, and shaming heaven by their misery and degradation. Every man should sit under his own vine and his own fig-tree, none daring to make him afraid."* Such are the visions of universal happiness by which the more disinterested of the Communists conceal from their own consciences the rapacity and bloodthirstiness of the Red Republic; but it is certain that the majority of these revolutionists aim chiefly at their own aggrandisement, and the subjection of all other classes.

The idea of community of property has always been a favourite one with the contrivers of those Utopias which make so great a figure in poetry and philosophical romance. Bacon, speaking of imaginative narratives in general—and the passage is particularly applicable to these conceptions of an ideal world—says that "the use of feigned histories hath been to give some shadow of satisfaction to the mind of man in those points wherein the nature of things doth deny it, the world being, in proportion, inferior to the soul; by reason whereof there is agreeable to the spirit of man a more ample greatness, a more exact goodness, and a more absolute variety, than can be found in the nature of things. And therefore poetry was ever thought to have some participation of divineness, because it doth raise and erect the mind by submitting the shows of things to the desires of the mind, whereas reason doth buckle and bow the mind unto the nature of things." Yes, and the nature of things will not submit to be set aside by the dreams of poetry, or of philanthropists who wade through slaughter to the golden age. It is a curious fact that Spenser has introduced into his "Faery Queene" (Book V., canto 2) a foolish giant, who essays to reduce everything to equality—even the hills and valleys, and the other presumed defects of Nature. He asks a knight, who represents the principle of Justice:—

> "Were it not good that wrong were then surceast,
> And from the most that some were given to the least?
>
> "Therefore I will throw down these mountains high,
> And make them level with the lowly plain;
> These towering rocks, which reach unto the sky,
> I will thrust down into the deepest main,
> And as they were them equalise again.
> Tyrants, that make men subject to their law,
> I will suppress, that they no more may reign,
> And lordings curb that commons overawe,
> And all the wealth of rich men to the poor will draw."

The knight argues with this revolutionary giant and tries to convince him of the impracticable nature of his schemes; but in vain—

> "For it was not the right which he did seek."

The squire attending on the knight then flings the giant down from a rock into the sea, and afterwards, when the mob rise in rebellion, beats them into submission with an iron flail. It is the history of the Paris Commune, foreshadowed by an English poet in the reign of Elizabeth.

Good old Gonzalo, in the "Tempest," imagines a similar Republic, but only as a matter of sport and idle conversation. Shakespeare got his notions in this respect from an essay of Montaigne's (Book I., chapter 30), as translated by John Florio. Describing an imaginary nation of savages, Montaigne says:—"Me seemeth that what in those nations we see by experience doth not only exceed all the pictures wherewith licentious poesy hath proudly embellished the golden age, and all her quaint inventions to fain a happy condition of man, but also the conception and desire of philosophy. They could not imagine a genuity so pure and simple as we see it by experience; nor ever believe our society might be maintained with so little art and human combination. It is a nation, would I answer Plato, that hath no kind of traffic, no knowledge of letters, no intelligence of numbers, no name of magistrate, nor of politic superiority; no use of service, of riches, or of poverty; no contracts, no successions, no dividences; no occupation, but idle; no respect of kindred, but common; no apparel, but natural; no manuring of lands; no use of wine, corn, or metal. The very words that import lying, falsehood, treason, dissimulation, covetousness, envy, detraction, and pardon, were never heard amongst them. How dissonant would

* *Quarterly Review*, January. 1872.



BARRICADE BEFORE THE HÔTEL DE VILLE.



UNDER MILITARY LAW.

he find his imaginary commonwealth from this perfection!" Montaigne grows quite enthusiastic over the virtues of his pet communists; but it seems there was some little drawback from their amiability. For they were cannibals, and ate their prisoners of war.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Progress of the Revolution in Paris—Unarmed Pacific Demonstration—Massacre by the insurgent National Guards—Defence of the Wrong-doers by the Communist *Official Journal*—Arguments in Favour of the New Revolution—Sophistical Views of Political Right—Official Advocacy of Political Assassination—Negotiations between Admiral Saisset and the Central Committee—Supposed Reconciliation—Admiral Saisset obliged to resign his Functions, and retire to Versailles—The Communal Elections—Protests against their Legality—Adverse Criticism of the Independent Press on the Action of the Commune—Proclamations of the Central Committee, explaining and defending their Policy—Extravagant and Absurd Demands—Proclamation of the Versailles Government—Red Republican Disturbances at Lyons and Elsewhere—German Communications with the Versailles Government and the Central Committee of Paris—Progress of Anarchy—Energetic Action of the Communists—Proceedings of the Government at Versailles—Useless Suggestions of a Compromise—Two False Steps retracted.

EVENTS in Paris moved on quickly towards the dreadful extremity of civil war. All hope of conciliation soon vanished; yet attempts at conciliation were made. As shown in a previous chapter, M.

Thiers gave proofs in the Assembly of a disposition to concede some of the demands of the insurgents; and the *Commune*, a new journal issued in the interests of the Red Republic, said it had reason to believe that the Central Committee of Paris would come to terms with the Government at Versailles on the following conditions:—The election of a Communal Council of Paris by the people; the reorganisation of the National Guard, and the election and removal of the officers of all grades by the National Guards themselves; the suppression of the Prefecture of Police, whose duties should be subject to the Commune of Paris; and the suppression of the army of Paris. A manifesto, signed by all the chiefs of battalion of the insurgent National Guards in the second arrondissement, was posted up on the 21st of March, in which it was stated that the deputies of Paris, in concert with the Mayors and Adjoints, had resolved to defend the Republic against any one who attacked it, and an appeal was made to the National Guards generally to second the work of conciliation, of which, it was added, the leading principles had been accepted. On the same day a manifestation was made by a considerable mass of unarmed citizens, who proceeded through the streets with a flag bearing the inscription, "Union of the Men of Order." Shouts in favour of the Assembly, of the Republic, and of order, were raised from time to time; and the demonstrators marched to the Place Vendôme, where some of the insurgent battalions were drawn up. The latter then prevented any further advance with their bayonets; but, after an angry altercation, the representatives of the Revolutionary Committee asked the flag-bearers to send delegates to discuss matters. Nothing came of the movement at the time, and it is said that the aspect and manner of the insurgents showed how little inclined they were to take a pacific course. They and their comrades, the disloyal troops, looked like the very refuse of the most criminal quarters of the city, and their stoppage of the procession was characterised by great brutality. The guns were suddenly wheeled round, and pointed against the advancing unarmed citizens, and every sign was given of a disposition to resort to massacre itself, if the demonstrators had offered to proceed any further.

The general appearance of Paris was remarkable. In the greater part of the city, business went on as usual; the theatres were open, and the railway traffic between the capital and Versailles was uninterrupted. But sentries of the National Guard were posted at the gates to prevent the passage of arms, munitions, and provisions from Paris; and in the quarters of Belleville and Montmartre everything was subordinated to military considerations. The inhabitants of that part of the town were being constantly disturbed by alarms—by the firing of rifles, the beating of drums, and the sounding of the tocsin. Very strict discipline was maintained by the commanders of the revolted National Guards, and several of the men murmured at the severity with which they were treated for comparatively slight offences. It was found necessary to disarm a company of the 7th Battalion, because it refused to obey the orders of the Central Committee. Meanwhile, the *Official Journal* of the Commune (which seems to have been the old *Official Journal* in new hands) adopted a rather complaining, self-justificatory tone. In its Number for March 21st it observed:—"The *prolétaires* of the capital, amid the weakness of the governing classes, comprehended that the time had come for them to save their country by taking in hand the management of public affairs. Will they never be permitted to strive after their emancipation without calling forth a concert of curses upon their heads?" The question was an absurd one, as the classes referred to had been "emancipated" for several years, and what they were now aiming at was nothing else than the power to tyrannise over everybody else. The article then went on to make an appeal to the trading classes, who were asked if they did not understand that the time for emancipation by the proletariat had arrived. The trading classes might very readily have answered by simply inquiring, "Emancipation from what?" If they had any desire for emancipation, it was from the savage and lawless despotism by which they were now oppressed. Their protests against the rule of the Red Republic showed this, and the tragic incident of March 22nd proved how much cause they had to dread a continuance of the anarchy which had managed to over-ride Paris.

The collision on the 22nd of the month arose from another of those demonstrations in favour of order which seemed to be the only thing the well-affected citizens could do. A large number of persons—unarmed, as on the previous morning—assembled, about one o'clock in the middle of the day, in the vicinity of the new Opera House, uttering cries of "Long live the Republic!" "Long live the National Assembly!" "Down with the Committee!" The greater number of the men were out of uniform, but some wore their military dress as members of the National Guard. Admiral Saisset was present, and so were other naval and military officers. The demonstrators, being determined that the affair should be of the most peaceful

character, as far as they were concerned, would not allow some National Guards who appeared with their weapons to join the procession. At half-past one, before the unarmed citizens had set out, several of the insurgent National Guards from the Place Vendôme were seen approaching. They had orders to disperse the gathering; but, finding so large a body before them, they retired slowly down the Rue de la Paix. The demonstrators then advanced, with Admiral Saisset at their head, until their progress was stopped by a strong body of Red Republican Guards, who, with bayonets fixed, were drawn across the entrance to the Place Vendôme. Nevertheless, the civilians continued to move forward, uttering their watchwords, and endeavouring to persuade the armed force to join in their demonstration. Some few of the Communist National Guards threw up the butt-ends of their rifles in the air; but shortly afterwards the drums on the Place were heard to beat the charge, and, as the National Guards on the spot were known to be among the most violent of the extreme faction, there appeared but too much reason to fear the worst. Before the parleying between the front ranks had come to an end, a single shot was fired, followed by four or five others, and then by a volley. The civilians, struck with panic, fled with the utmost precipitation; but the Communists continued firing. Some sixty people were stretched dead and wounded on the ground; yet the National Guards of the Place Vendôme did not seem as if they could sufficiently glut their ferocity. The firing continued for about a quarter of an hour—sometimes in straggling shots, sometimes in volleys. Even after it had ceased in the main, a National Guard was seen to kneel down, and deliberately aim at some persons who had ventured to come forward and assist the wounded. Many of the killed and injured were people accidentally passing at the time, and taking no part in the demonstration. Admiral Saisset was for a time in great danger; but a young lieutenant of the National Guards, named Reinhard, threw himself in front of his chief commander in the thickest of the firing, with the words, "Don't be afraid, Admiral! A ball shall go through my body before it reaches yours." Numerous escapes of a very remarkable character were reported; but blood had again been shed, and the Communists had inaugurated a veritable Reign of Terror. The peaceable citizens sought their houses in dismay; shutters were closed, shops were shut up, and those few who were obliged to be in the streets hurried along with scared faces, starting at every noise, and shrinking from the ruffians in uniform who swaggered in the intoxication of their triumph.

The *Official Journal* of the Commune of course defended the conduct of the insurgent National Guards. It asserted that the persons composing the demonstration of the friends of order were the instigators of the collision; that they disarmed and maltreated two advanced sentinels, grossly insulted the National Guards, and fired a shot from a revolver, which wounded a lieutenant in the thigh. Hereupon, continued this account, "General Bergeret summoned the demonstration to retire, and had the drums beaten for five minutes, the only reply to which consisted of shouts and insults, and two of the National Guards fell severely wounded. The crowd tried to break the lines of the Nationals, and to disarm them; then the firing commenced, which Bergeret stopped immediately afterwards." It was added that shots were fired from the houses, that two of the National Guards were killed and eight wounded, that a large number of revolvers and sword-sticks were found in the Rue de la Paix, and that General Sheridan, who crossed that street at the time, had attested the fact that shots were fired by the persons composing the demonstration. An absurd story was told, to the effect that persons appeared at some of the windows, and fired down upon the people, and that these persons, on being afterwards arrested, proved to be old Imperial policemen, who had been commissioned to fire on purpose to create disorder. The Empire being the scapegoat of all parties at that period, nothing was too absurd to be alleged to its discredit, or too wild to find temporary credence. The assertion, however, that the first shot was fired by the civilians was disproved by the concurrent testimony of the independent journals, and by the evidence of some English spectators. The demonstrators were unarmed; the insurgents had their weapons with them; and the whole conduct of the latter was such as to strengthen all statements to their discredit, and to throw the utmost doubt on the veracity of their self-exculpations.

The official organ exhibited great solicitude to set itself favourably before the world with respect to the general political situation. On the morning of the day thus stained with the blood of civil strife, it contained an article, entitled "Paris in the Right," in which the new revolution was thus defended by as strong an array of arguments as its advocates could muster:—

"Where is the sovereignty of the people—at Versailles or at Paris? To put such a question is to resolve it. The Assembly which met first at Bordeaux, and which now sits at Versailles, has been elected under particular circumstances, and entrusted with a fixed mission, with a species of imperative and restricted

mandate. Elected on the eve of a capitulation, when the territory was in the occupation of the enemy, the elections of its members have necessarily been held under the foreign pressure of the Prussian bayonets. The deputies of the departments occupied could not have been freely elected. Now that the preliminaries of peace, whereby two provinces have been ceded, are signed, the deputies of Alsace and Lorraine could no longer sit in the Assembly; they have understood this, and have resigned their seats. Several other deputies have followed their example. The Assembly is therefore incomplete. The elections of some of its members have been vitiated by foreign occupation and foreign pressure. This Assembly, therefore, does not represent completely and unquestionably the free sovereignty of the people. On another side, the vote of confidence passed is a proof of their hatred towards Paris, where they refuse to sit. The Bordeaux and Versailles Assembly overlooks the services rendered by Paris, and the generous spirit of her devoted population. Its members are not worthy to sit in the capital. They have shown their intense spirit of reaction by their narrow-minded views; they have shown their exclusive and rural opinions by their want of toleration for the most illustrious and devoted citizens. This Provincial Assembly has given proofs that the present events are beyond its reach, and that it is incapable of undertaking and executing any energetic and indispensable measure required by the safety of the country. It is only a freely elected Assembly, an Assembly elected without foreign pressure, without official reactionary influence, and sitting in Paris, that the whole of France can recognise as having the character of national sovereignty, and which can be entrusted with legislative and constituent powers. Without independent and free elections, there can be, out of Paris, but shadowy phantoms of national representation, of sovereign Assembly. Let the present Assembly, therefore, quietly perform the sad task with which it has been entrusted, that is to say, of resolving the question of peace or war; and let it quickly disappear. Its mission is but limited. It cannot, without encroaching on the sovereignty of the people, assume constituent powers, and the right of making organic laws. On Paris devolves the duty of compelling respect for the sovereignty of the people, and of protecting their rights. Paris can neither be separated from the provinces, nor allow them to be separated from her. Paris has been, is still, and must definitively remain, the capital of France; the head and heart of the Democratic Republic, one and indivisible. Paris has therefore an unquestionable right to proceed with the elections of the Communal Council, to govern herself as becomes every democratic city, and to protect herself, supported by the National Guards, composed of all citizens, electing their own chiefs by universal suffrage. The Central Committee of the National Guard, in taking the necessary measures for the establishment of a Paris Communal Council, and the elections of all the chiefs of the National Guards, has therefore taken very wise and most indispensable measures. It is now the duty of the electors and of the National Guards to support the decisions of the Government, to assure the safety of France and the future of the Republic, by returning by their votes proved and devoted Republicans. To-morrow they will hold their fate in their own hands, and we are already convinced they will make a proper use of their rights. Let Paris deliver France and save the Republic. (Signed)

"THE DELEGATES OF THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL."

There was unquestionably a great deal of truth in this argument, and yet it did not amount to a justification of the Commune. Undoubtedly the National Assembly had been elected under a restricted mandate. Its business was to decide on the question of peace or war, and then to dissolve, so that another Assembly, chosen under more favourable circumstances, might take its place, bearing direct from the constituencies a clear expression of the national will on all the great questions of the day. On this subject the Emperor Napoleon himself and the Commune were agreed; for the former had already stated, in his protest addressed to M. Grévy, that the Chamber, appointed solely for the purpose of making peace, had exceeded its powers in pronouncing the deposition of his dynasty. But the fact that the National Assembly had gone beyond the limit of its instructions did not in the slightest degree justify a single city—on the motion, moreover, of a minority even in that very city—in attempting to make itself independent of the rest of the nation, in setting up a distinct Government, and in threatening the country with civil war. The question was one for the nation at large to decide, and it must be admitted that, outside the revolutionary circles of Paris, Lyons, Marseilles, and a few other towns, the nation did not seem greatly to resent the conduct of its representatives meeting first at Bordeaux and afterwards at Versailles. Paris is only a small part of France, and it is the height of arrogance for a part to presume to dictate to the whole. This, however, was what Paris had always striven after, until France, fairly sick of the fierce and fickle tyranny, seemed to have resolved to put an end to it for ever. Of the two disputants—Assembly and Commune—the greater show of authority certainly lay with the former; though its powers were by no means as valid as could be wished. The questionable ends of the Commune, and the sanguinary violence with which it did not scruple to promote them, were other circumstances which contributed to place it still more in the wrong. The indecent cruelty of the Red Republicans was shown, on the 22nd, not only by the massacre of the unarmed civilians, but by the

burial of the murdered generals, Lecomte and Thomas, whose bodies were ignominiously thrown into a ditch in the little cemetery of Montmartre. A few days later—on the 28th—the *Official Journal* published an article by M. Vaillant, the delegate of the Committee for the Home Department established on the election of a Communal Council, in which political assassination was openly advocated. This article (which was reproduced with much commendation by the Red Republican press) said :—

"We are informed—but the statement has no official character—that the Duc d'Aumale is at Versailles. If that be true, it is because between Bordeaux and Versailles the Duc d'Aumale did not meet with a single citizen. It is from such facts that we learn how greatly the moral and civic sense has become weakened. In the Republics of old times, tyrannicide was the law; here a pretended morality designates as assassination that act of justice and necessity. To the corrupt beings who revel in monarchical rottenness, and the intriguers who fatten on it, is added the class of sentimental simpletons. These people declare that the poor devils of Princes are not responsible for the crimes of their fathers, of their name, or of their families. They forget that the son of a condemned criminal is not condemned by public opinion if he be not a criminal himself; but, for well-founded reasons, distrust attaches to all those who in youth have been exposed to the influence of such bad examples, and whose early education has had such a director. In the same manner, a Prince, the son of a Prince, who continues to style himself 'Prince,' and who, like the d'Aumale in question, dares to raise in Republican France the question of a monarchy and the claims of his family, excites our anger and demands our justice; and even should these Princes, who dream of throwing us back into oppression, have become enlightened by the genius of Revolution, that itself is a reason why they should understand that they must not become agents of disorder and of civil wars, and that they should resign themselves to expiate in a distant country the misfortune and the shame of their birth. For it is not enough that they pretend to be devoid of ambition; we remember the oaths and protestations of Buonaparte. Were they sincere? Their name, their presence, would be made use of by those whom ambition, interest, or intrigue attached to their fortunes; and, whatever might be the wish of the Prince, his evil-working influence would be the same. In the same manner that in the unchangeable course of things every discordant element is eliminated, and nothing which disturbs the equilibrium of Nature can continue, so in human society every cause of disturbance to moral order, every obstacle to the realisation of the ideal of justice which is the aim of the Revolution, must be removed. Society has but one duty towards Princes—Death. It is bound but to one formality—proof of identity. The Orleans are in France. The Buonapartes seek to return. Let all good citizens take note of it."

Shortly afterwards, the *Official Journal* made a half-hearted attempt to disown this article, on the plea that, being signed, it expressed only the opinion of an individual. But at the very same time it was added that there was a good deal to be said for the opinion expressed, which had the authority of all antiquity, and also of Montesquieu, Milton, and "Junius," among the moderns. With respect to Milton, however, it is not clear that he meant to sanction private assassination. He seems to have desired some species of judicial inquiry beforehand.

The Communal elections, which in the first instance were appointed for the 22nd, were afterwards postponed, and ultimately fixed for Sunday, the 26th of March. Admiral Saisset, who was charged with a conciliatory mission with regard to these elections, entered on his task with a high-sounding manifesto (issued on the 24th), the futility of which he was not slow in discovering. "I hope, by persuasion and wise advice," he said, "to effect the reconciliation of all in the Republic; but I am firmly resolved to give my life, if it should be necessary, in defence of order, and to enforce respect for persons and property. Rally to me. Give me your confidence, and the Republic will be saved. My motto is, 'Honour and country!'" Negotiations were entered into between the admiral and the Revolutionary Committee, and an agreement was soon reached with regard to the general fact of the municipal elections; but a split ensued as to the day on which they should be held. The National Assembly had already passed a law appointing the 10th of April for this purpose; but the Central Committee said that the elections must positively take place on the 26th of March. Admiral Saisset and the Mayors contended that this would not give sufficient time for necessary preparations, and they successively proposed April 3rd and March 30th, as compromises. The Central Committee, however, would not listen to any change whatever. Some, indeed, were willing to give way on the point; but the majority were moveless, and Admiral Saisset found that he could do nothing. While the negotiations were going on, the more hopeful of the citizens leapt to the conclusion that the division between the Versailles Government and the Parisian Red Republicans was at an end. On the evening of the 24th, a scene of joyful excitement occurred on the Boulevards, when a number of insurgent National Guards announced that the reconciliation was signed, and that thenceforward it would be nothing but work, industry, prosperity, and concord. The civilians threw their hats into the air, and joined in exclamations of delight.

People appeared at the windows and doors of houses, with smiling countenances; others leapt on the chairs and benches of the Boulevards. The representatives of the Versailles authority had received during the day a number of cannon and mitrailleuses; and these formidable weapons were now bestridden by sailors, soldiers, and National Guards, who drank to each other, and passed bottles from hand to hand, with fraternal cordiality. Strangers embraced one another, and high and low mingled without restraint in the sense of relief and congratulation. It was understood, according to a correspondent of the *Daily News*, that the peace negotiated by Admiral Saisset had been concluded on the following terms:—That the different Mairies which had been invaded should be restored to their respective districts; that the Mayors were to return to their posts; that they were to prepare for the immediate election of the Commune; and that when the election should be achieved, the Central Committee on the one side, and Admiral Saisset on the other, should retire. The deputies of Paris, it was said, had also consented to this agreement. The disappointment, consequently, was very great when, next morning, it was found that any agreement between the rival powers was farther off than ever. The majority of the Central Committee were afraid of postponing the elections, lest, in the meanwhile, the Versailles Government should be enabled to collect and organise its forces, to march on Paris, and to put down the Commune before it had received such degree of authorisation as it might derive from the suffrages of the Parisians. During the morning of the 25th, Admiral Saisset and the Mayors made another attempt at compromise. They said, "Let the elections be on the 28th instead of the 26th of March;" but the leading members of the Central Committee were still inflexible. They were resolved that the elections should be on the following day—Sunday, the 26th. Upon this, Admiral Saisset, knowing that he had not force enough at his disposal to coerce the insurgents, disbanded his few battalions (in the teeth of his proclamation of the day before), and left on foot and in disguise for Versailles, where he reported to M. Thiers that it would take 300,000 men to suppress the Communal movement in Paris.



PASCHAL GROUSSET.

The right of the Central Committee to order elections was disputed by the respectable classes in Paris. The conductors of some of the principal journals held a meeting on the 20th of March, at which they adopted a resolution, stating that, as the convocation of the electors constituted an act of national sovereignty, which belonged exclusively to the authorities elected by universal suffrage, and as the Committee sitting at the Hôtel de Ville had no right or qualification to make such a convocation, they (the newspaper editors) regarded the order for holding the elections as null and void, and engaged not to take it into consideration in their respective journals. This resolution was published by the subscribing papers in their issue of March 21st, and so irritated the Central Committee that they threatened, if such acts were repeated, to curtail the liberty of the press. The Mayors Deputy-Mayors, and representatives of Paris, also issued a proclamation on the subject, dated March 22nd, and addressed to the National Guards and all citizens. They here said:—

"The country is bleeding, mutilated, and on the point of expiring; and, we her children, give her the last blow. The foreigner is at our gates, watching the moment to enter as master, should we turn against each other our fratricidal arms. In the name of all the great recollections of our unhappy France—in the name of our children, whose future we are destroying for ever, and with broken hearts—we appeal to you that our hands may be joined again as they were joined during the sad and glorious hours of the siege. Let us not lose in one day the honour which we have guarded intact for five months with an unexampled courage. Let us citizens seek that which unites us, not that which divides us. We wished to maintain and strengthen the great institution of the National Guard, whose



PROCLAMATION OF THE COMMUNE.

existence is inseparable from that of the Republic. We shall have it. We wished that Paris should recover her liberty, so long confiscated by an arrogant despotism. We shall have it. Your wishes have been submitted to the National Assembly by your deputies. The Chamber has acceded to them by a unanimous vote, which guarantees the municipal elections within a short period in Paris and all the communes of France. In awaiting these elections, which alone are legal, regular, and in conformity to the true principles of Republican institutions, it is the duty of all good citizens not to respond to the appeal made to them without authority, without right. We, your municipal representative, we, your deputies, declare therefore that we shall entirely ignore the elections announced for to-morrow. We protest against their illegality. Citizens, let us unite in respecting the law. Thus the country and the Republic will be saved. Long live France! Long live the Republic!"

The independent press continued to criticise the acts of the new authorities with the utmost boldness. The *Journal des Débats* said that after the events on the Place Vendôme the party which had taken possession of the Hôtel de Ville could have but one name—the party of assassination; while M. John Lemoinne, in the same paper, openly defied the Committee, branded its members as "refuse," and signified his determination not to submit to its decrees and warnings. Brutality, remarked this writer, might come from a Revolution as well as from a Dictator; and the former, like the latter, might fasten a gag on his mouth. "The Radical deputies of Paris and the Mayors of Paris," continued M. Lemoinne, "implore the population to remain quiet, because municipal elections will be granted to them. But what of that? What do the men who drench our streets in blood care about a suffrage more or less free? All questions affecting proletarianism, wages, and work, are questions to be settled by peace only, and in time of peace only. The men who sincerely and seriously occupy themselves with such questions know it well. It is the duty of the Assembly that represents the country, the duty of the Government which has left us with a light heart to get through our trouble as best we may, it is their duty to look after the safety of the country. Before, during, and after the war, Paris has done her duty. Before the war, Paris always voted for liberty; during the war, Paris fought and suffered; after the war, all miseries, all executions, and perhaps all disgraces, are reserved for Paris. We must not deceive ourselves. We are placed between the forts of the left bank and those of the right bank. The men who plunge us into civil war are those who bring upon us foreign occupation. It is thoroughly immaterial to them. They have no notion whatever of country, of honour, or of national sentiment." Perhaps the sharpest sting of this article was in a passage stating that the revolutionists were "paid" for dragging their country down into the abyss of ruin. The writer no doubt intended to hint that the Communists were Buonapartists in disguise—a charge, however, for which there is not the slightest support. The rebels themselves threatened to arrest all Buonapartist and Orleanist agents they might find. The intentions of the Communal authorities at this period were explained in a manifesto published on the 22nd of March by the Central Committee, and which was as follows:—

"Citizens!—You are called upon to elect your Communal Assembly—the Municipal Council of the City of Paris. For the first time since the 4th September, the Republic is freed from the Government of her enemies. In conformity with Republican rights, you convoke yourselves, by the organ of your Committee, in order to give the men whom you will yourselves elect a mission which you will yourselves define. Your sovereignty has been entirely restored to you; you are completely your own masters. Utilise this precious and perhaps only hour in order to regain the communal liberties elsewhere enjoyed by the most humble villages, and of which you have long been deprived. In giving to your city a powerful communal organisation, you will establish therein the first courts of your rights, as an indestructible basis of your Republican institutions. The right of the city is as undeniable as that of the nation; the city, like the nation, must have its Assembly, which, without distinction, calls itself Municipal or Communal Assembly, or Commune. It is this Assembly which recently could have been powerful and successful in the defence of the nation. To-day it may become the power and the salvation of the Republic. This Assembly establishes real order, which is alone durable, being founded on the often-renewed consent of a frequently-consulted majority. It suppresses every cause of conflict, of civil war, and of revolution, by suppressing all antagonism between the political opinion of Paris and the central Executive Power. It protects at the same time the rights of the city and the rights of the nation—those of the capital and those of the provinces; does justice to the interests of both, and reconciles the spirit by which both are animated. Finally, it gives to the city a National Militia which defends the citizens against power, instead of a standing army which defends power against the citizens; it gives a municipal police which pursues malefactors, instead of a political police which pursues honest people. This Assembly appoints special committees in its midst, who share its different labours—instruction, work, finance, public relief, National Guard, police, &c. The members of the Municipal Assembly, incessantly controlled, watched over, reviewed, by public opinion, are removable, accountable, and responsible. Such is the Assembly—a free city in a free country—which you are about to find. Citizens,—You will court the honour of contributing

by your vote to this foundation. You will achieve in Paris the glory to have laid the foundation-stone of a new social edifice, to have elected the first Republican commune.

"Citizens!—Paris does not want to reign, but she will be free. She has no other ambition to dictate than by example. She neither aspires to intrude her own will, nor will she renounce the same. She does not care any more to issue decrees than to submit to *plébiscites*. She represents progress by marching ahead herself, and prepares the liberty of others in founding her own. She does not push any one violently forward on the road of Republicanism, but is content to have entered upon it first herself."

This fair-sounding address really blinked all the great questions at issue. The desire of Paris to obtain a greater amount of municipal freedom was very natural, and even commendable; though it must always be borne in mind that the capital of a great Empire, as being the seat of a complicated system of government in which the whole country is interested, and as living, therefore, a life which is more national than local, is obliged to submit to some limitation of its civic liberties, and to be content with less than is granted to provincial towns. Thus, in London itself, notwithstanding the English tendency to local self-government, the police is controlled by the Government, because, as London is the seat of Empire, the constabulary are in some measure required for Imperial purposes. The obtaining of municipal privileges for Paris was a most legitimate object—one to which the efforts of the best politicians might well have been directed; but the end could have been reached without the misery of a civil war, and, after all, it was not the only nor the chief design of the agitators. What they mainly desired was the inauguration of a new system of society, in which property should be held in common, and all the accepted modes of life should be violently outraged and destroyed. The assertion that Paris did not wish to dictate to the provinces, was obviously untruthful. It was doing so at that moment, for the Central Committee were sending emissaries to all the large towns to raise the standard of the Red Republic; and it is very certain that, if the Communists could have prevailed, they would have forced their opinions and methods on unwilling France.

Another proclamation of the Central Committee, published on the 25th (before the negotiations had broken off, and while there was yet hope of conciliation), said that the cause of their divisions rested on a misinterpretation, and that, acting as loyal adversaries should do, they wished to clear this up, and would therefore state their legitimate complaints. The existing Government (that of Versailles was of course intended) was "an object of suspicion to the democrats." However, they had accepted it, though at the same time they reserved to themselves the right of protecting the Republic. Paris having been betrayed by this Government, the Communal party made a revolution; and what they demanded was this:—"The preservation of the Republic, as being the only Government possible, and that cannot be discussed; the right of Paris to have a Municipal Council; the suppression of the Prefecture of Police, as demanded by M. de Kératry; the suppression of the permanent army, and the right of the National Guard alone to maintain order; the right of the National Guards to elect all their chiefs, and their reorganisation on a certain basis that would afford guarantees to the people." In response to these demands, the Government re-established the state of siege, which had been gradually disappearing of itself, and bestowed the chief command in Paris on General Vinoy, who at once assumed a threatening attitude. Moreover, the Government interfered with public liberty; suppressed six newspapers; appointed to the command of the National Guards a general disliked by the people, who was charged with the duty of reorganising the force on the old anti-democratic basis; and placed at the head of the police a "gendarme" in the person of General Valentin, ex-colonel of Gendarmerie. The authors of the proclamation then went on to discuss the question of the cannons. "We wished," they said, "to preserve until our reorganisation the cannons paid for by us, which we had kept away from the Prussians. The Assembly tried to seize them from us by a night attack, and when its supporters had arms in their hands they would grant us nothing. But it was necessary that we should obtain our rights, and we rose pacifically, though in a body. To-day we are told that the Assembly, in a state of fear, wishes to allow us to hold, at some time not fixed, communal elections, as well as the right of electing our chiefs, and that we have therefore no excuse for prolonging our resistance. The plea is bad. We have been deceived too often not to fear that we shall be again deluded; not to fear lest the left hand should retake what the right hand has given—lest the people should once more be put on one side, and deception and treason again be victorious." The proclamation concluded with a repudiation of "the few paid men" who were seeking to spread division in the Communal ranks, and with an earnest appeal to the citizens generally not to abstain from voting at the approaching elections—a course which would only be making a shift with their consciences.

On the showing of this authentic statement of the Communal designs by the Communists themselves, it is evident that some of their demands were extravagant and absurd, and such as could not have been yielded by any Government without risking the national unity and safety. The suppression of a police force in unison with the State, the abolition of a permanent army, the right of the National Guards to elect their own officers and govern themselves in entire independence of the Administration, and the entrusting to this force, so organised, and to it alone, the maintenance of what the Committee were pleased to term "order," were all so many devices for laying Paris, and through Paris the whole of France, at the mercy of a turbulent faction, against which the Government, and the social system it represented, would have been utterly powerless. The permission to hold municipal elections, however, should have been granted before the outbreak of dissensions. It was a reasonable and proper demand, and the refusal or neglect to comply with it may well have seemed evidence of a disposition on the part of the Government to acquire dictatorial powers. When the concession came, it was too late. Ministers who yield to menace what they have refused to calmer requests, are generally credited with nothing better than the hope of supporting weakness by treachery. Yet, on the other hand, it must not be forgotten that the demand for a Communal Council had always been urged with more or less of violence.

The Versailles Government, on their part, issued to the people and army the following proclamation, signed by M. Thiers, in the name of the National Assembly, and dated March 22nd :—

"Citizens and Soldiers !—The greatest crime with a free people, a revolt against national sovereignty, adds fresh disasters to the troubles of the country. Senseless criminals, on the morrow following a great misfortune, when the foreigner had scarcely evacuated our ravaged fields, have not blushed to carry disorder, ruin, and dishonour into Paris, which they pretended to honour and defend. They have stained the city with blood, which raises the public conscience against them, and forbids them pronouncing the noble word 'Republic,' which has no other meaning than respect for the laws and liberty.

"France repudiates this odious attempt with indignation. Do not fear that we shall have the weakness to make any compromise with the guilty. We shall maintain the trust confided to us by the country, and the principle of national sovereignty. We are your sole representatives. France will not be modelled by a factious minority.

"It is for you to defend your rights and to maintain yourselves. We appeal to your courage for assistance. We adjure you to rally round the Assembly, which is your work, and the symbol of hope and safety."

The course of events proved that this appeal was not unheeded. In Lyons, Marseilles, Toulouse, and a few other towns, there were some Red Republican movements on the receipt of the news from Paris; but they were suppressed (though in some quarters not without difficulty), and the country in the main undoubtedly supported the Government of M. Thiers.

The action taken by Prussia, pending the elections, was for a time somewhat ambiguous. The semi-official *Provincial Correspondenz* of Berlin remarked in its issue of March 22nd :—"We shall certainly not now interfere with the internal dissensions of Paris and France. We shall under all circumstances know how to guard our own interests, and to watch over the fulfilment of the engagements entered upon with us. We have, of course, for the present, only to deal with the Government chosen by the nation, and recognised by all Powers, and can await how far that Government will be willing and able to maintain its position, and succeed in the great task imposed upon it. Our Government has taken all necessary measures, in order at any time and in every direction to give full effect to our just demands." Yet on the same day M. Jules Favre read from the tribune of the French Assembly a letter from Count Bismarck, complaining that the condition of things in Paris offered scarcely any hope of the engagements entered into with Germany being kept, and adding that, if the rebellion were not speedily put down, Paris would be once more bombarded. The Foreign Minister had also received a telegram from the Prussian commander, General Fabrice, stating that the officer in charge of the army before Paris had interdicted all approach to his lines at the occupied posts, and that any attempt on the part of the insurgents to re-arm the *enceinte* would be immediately followed by the forts occupied by the Germans again opening fire. In reading these communications, M. Jules Favre said he had begged for time, in order that innocent people might not suffer, and had told General Fabrice that the rising in Paris was a surprise, but that all France was faithful to the Government at Versailles. Nevertheless, he had given it to be understood that, if Paris did not submit, he would concert with the Prussians the measures necessary for subduing it. The insurgents, on their side, produced a letter from the Commander-in-Chief of the German army in the vicinity of Paris to the acting governor of Paris (a Communal authority, of course), informing him that the German troops

which occupied the forts to the north and west of the city, as well as the environs of the right bank of the Seine, had received orders to remain peaceful and passive, so long as the events then proceeding did not assume a hostile character towards the German armies, but kept strictly to the terms arranged in the preliminaries of peace. In the contrary case, Paris would be treated as an enemy. This communication was dated March 21st, and was signed by the Chief of the Staff, von Schlottheim. The rebels (who were highly delighted with the letter thus addressed to them, which they accepted as a contradiction of what Jules Favre had stated in the Assembly at Versailles) replied that they meant to respect the preliminaries of peace voted by the national representatives at Bordeaux. The German authorities seem to have thought at first (and not unreasonably) that the triumph of the Red Republicans would be followed by a resumption of the war. When they found that this was not the case, they adopted a position of neutrality, animated at times, it would almost appear, by a certain degree of friendliness.

The condition of Paris became most alarming as the days wore on. Panics frequently occurred in the streets, owing to the fears of the people that the insurgent National Guards would repeat the atrocity of the Place Vendôme, as, on more than one occasion, they seemed disposed to do. The bodies of those killed in the affair of the 22nd were paraded along the Boulevards amidst a scene of the wildest excitement. On the Mairie of the Faubourg St. Honoré the rebels posted up a notice, saying, "Bread and the *régime* of '93! All citizens ought to denounce those whom they suspect, and justice will be done." In the second arrondissement, the Provisional Commission of Police appointed by the rebels directed the inhabitants to point out, and if need were to arrest, any one whom they might suspect of complicity with the Versailles Government. Another notice, placarded at the Hôtel de Ville, stated that all thieves taken in the act would be shot. This may have been a necessity of the time, but it showed how completely all the ordinary processes of law and justice were suspended. The loyal National Guards—those favourable to the Versailles Government—made feeble efforts from time to time to counteract the designs of the rebels; but these were always defeated, and after a while many of the loyal men felt strongly tempted to join the Commune, as they were left entirely without pay, and were reduced to great extremities. Yet the Communal Guards themselves were now very far from satisfied with their pecuniary position; for, whereas they had at first six francs a day paid in hard cash, they soon received only one franc in cash and the rest in cheques of the Central Committee, which they found very difficult to negotiate. The money trouble was one of the greatest which the rebels had to encounter; and plans of confiscation were entertained very early in the progress of the insurrection. Armed attempts were made to seize money at the banks, but were successfully resisted by the well-affected National Guards. The Bank of France closed its doors on the 24th, and was guarded by loyal battalions; but it was ultimately obliged to make advances to the Commune. In other respects the rule of anarchy was dismally apparent. The Hôtel de Ville, the headquarters of the insurrection, was surrounded by cannon and barricades. Large numbers of persons continued to fly from Paris, but were often turned back by the rebels, who seized all munitions of war in transit, and seriously interfered with the railway traffic between Paris and Versailles. Everything looked ominous and menacing, and the insurgents must have felt doubtful whether they would be able to prosecute to a successful termination the desperate enterprise on which they had embarked. As usual with conspirators, they were greatly at issue among themselves. One of their leading members—M. Lullier—was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the National Guards, and the very next day was dismissed for throwing a chair at the head of another member of the committee during a heated discussion. At the same time he was arrested by his colleagues, who described his extravagances as dangerous to the cause. As, however, the Minister of War was the notorious General Cluseret, whose extravagances it would not be easy to surpass, the reason alleged could hardly have been the true one. It was indeed said by one of the English correspondents that M. Lullier's real offence was his comparative moderation. He was in favour of the Committee coming to an understanding with the Mayors and Parisian deputies, in order, through them, to arrange matters with the National Assembly. He condemned the firing on the people in the Place Vendôme, and constantly demanded the release of General Chanzy during his week of captivity. Accordingly he was accused of being a reactionist, a dictator, and a partisan. Irritated by these epithets, he retorted, "What would you be without me? I have brought you here, and can send you off again." He was then arrested, and his colleagues said he was seized with a sudden fit of insanity. Before one of the courts-martial sitting after the suppression of the Commune, Lullier himself said that the true cause



THE LINE OF DEMARCATION.

of his arrest was that he had a programme far more moderate than that of the others. "They put forth," said he, "that I was extravagant. I never went to bed. I used to dine and sup on a little warm coffee, having no time for eating or sleeping. As for them, it was an easy matter to be calm and self-possessed. They spent their whole time at the dining-tables, whilst lovely young women, selected



THE CROWN PRINCE AND PRINCESS OF GERMANY (1871).

with due care, helped them to the cup of victory." Lullier's position towards the Commune, however, was certainly suspicious. He seems to have been either a traitor or a madman.

Thus divided into two camps, Paris awaited the elections. The streets still bristled with cannon. The insurgents occupied certain quarters, the loyal National Guards certain others; each army had its guns and mitrailleuses, and nothing but a dread of one another prevented a general massacre. Much more energy, however, was exhibited by the Red Republicans than by the friends of order. The

École Polytechnique was entered on the 22nd of March by delegates from the Committee, who offered superior commands in the Army of Paris to all the scholars. The whole school thereupon received eight days' holiday from the Director, and the scholars immediately placed themselves at the disposal of the Provisional Staff installed in the Place de la Bourse, to act as aides-de-camp. The young students of Paris are for the most part ultra-Republicans, and the Revolutionary Committee showed a great appreciation of the materials they might possibly turn to account, in thus appealing to their sympathies. Yet there were those who thought that the new authorities were not sufficiently energetic in establishing their power.. A semi-official organ of the Committee, called *La Nouvelle République*, was of opinion that measures should be taken for suppressing those newspapers which "preached contempt for the revolution;" that is to say, the exceptional exercise of the powers

of the State which had been denounced by these very people as the most infamous of crimes when resorted to by the Empire on behalf of the majority, and again by the Moderate Republic, had become a virtue and a duty in the hands of a faction which represented only a small minority. Paris, said the semi-official writer, was resolved to organise and govern herself; it only remained for the departments to bend their heads. In order to consolidate its power, the Committee proceeded to form a regular military administration, and on the 24th of March issued a placard which stated that, in consequence of the precarious condition of the city, which every day became more and more marked, and which necessitated the saving of the Republic at any price, and considering that on all sides the commanding officers continued the errors of the past—that they had by their inaction brought on the existing state of affairs, and that the monarchical reaction had, by mutiny and falsehood, prevented the elections which should have constituted the only legal power in Paris—therefore the Committee decreed that the military power of the city was placed in the hands of the delegates, Messieurs Brunel, Eudes, and Duval, who would bear the title of General, and would act in concert until the arrival of General Garibaldi, unanimously elected Commander-in-Chief. According to some accounts, it was Garibaldi's son, Menotti, who was nominated to the head of the Communal forces; but, as a matter of fact, neither disgraced himself by giving his services to the cause of assassination and of rapine.

Notwithstanding their remarkable and perhaps almost unexpected success, the Communists were for some time in considerable dread of a surprise by the Government troops. In the days of his power, the Emperor Napoleon had constructed several subterranean passages leading from the basement of the Hôtel de Ville to various barracks, to the Tuileries, and to other strategical points of the city. The workmen who made these tunnels were told that they were intended for sewers; but they were in truth underground means of communication, by which soldiers could be despatched to the civic hall, even if the streets were barricaded and filled with a revolutionary crowd. The great object of Parisian insurgents is always to get the mastery of the Hôtel de Ville; for it seems to be thought that a decree dated from that edifice has some peculiar efficacy in making a government. It was therefore a politic stroke on the part of the Emperor to provide a number of private entrances into the building, so that, in case of an insurrection, he might be able to pour a sudden and unexpected body of troops on to the conspirators in their main stronghold. The entrance to the tunnels was kept a secret by the Imperial Government; but the secret passed into the possession of the Provisional Administration created by the revolution of September, 1870, and it was through these subterranean ways that the Breton Mobiles went to the relief of Trochu in the disturbances of October 31st. The Communists now feared a similar surprise. It was discovered, early in the rebellion, that an officer who had the plan of the secret passages had gone off to Versailles; and on the evening of the 19th of March a National Guard who had been employed in the construction of the tunnels informed Assi, one of the members of the Central Committee, that at any time the insurgents at the Hôtel de Ville might be surprised, if they did not keep a sharp look-out. He said he was unable to indicate the openings to the passages; but he felt certain that the edifice was exposed to invasion from eight different points, no matter how well the streets were guarded. Orders were accordingly given to disarm all the troops stationed in the barracks with which the Hôtel de Ville was said to communicate; which was done without any difficulty, as the soldiers showed every disposition to fraternise. Three of the unknown tunnels were afterwards discovered; but, as the others still remained a mystery, the courts and cellars of the civic hall, and the square in front, were filled with armed men.* From this apprehension the Communists were not delivered until they had completely gained the upper hand.

The condition of the Hôtel de Ville at this time was singular. It was like a fortification. Mitrailleuses appeared at the windows, mounted on tables and desks; vulnerable places were defended with sand-bags and feather-beds; stacks of arms were to be seen everywhere; the pictures and statues were removed; the rich carpets were caked with mud; dust and dirt encrusted everything; and a foul air lingered in the courts, vestibules, and antechambers. The insurgent chiefs occupying the principal rooms were described as not at all ferocious in appearance, but as looking languid and feeble, like underfed men on the eve of typhoid fever. They gave interviews to some of the English newspaper correspondents, and behaved with courtesy and consideration. Several of the National Guards standing about were intoxicated, and all were dirty and clamorous. It is remarkable that none of the well-known leaders of revolution appeared among the Central Committee; but they seem to have exercised great influence in the background, and they soon came to the front.

* Correspondent of the *Daily News*

While the insurrection was thus strengthening itself in Paris, the Government and the Assembly at Versailles were preparing for the struggle which, in spite of the assurances of M. Thiers, was plainly inevitable. During the sitting of the Chamber on the 23rd of March, the Ministers proposed a law for a reorganisation of volunteers to act against the insurgents. After some opposition, and the rejection of several amendments, the Government scheme was approved by 433 votes against 79. The preamble of the Bill said:—"In presence of the assassinations which are staining the capital with blood, and with a view to assist her, volunteer corps will be formed to co-operate with the army under the authority of the Minister of War." It was decided that every department should despatch to the seat of Government a battalion recruited as rapidly as possible from old and trusty soldiers. These men were to be sent on at once to Versailles, and were to receive a franc and a half daily. Troops and commanding officers, moreover, were arriving constantly from Germany, and were rapidly reorganised for service against the rebels; while one of the loyal regiments shut up in Paris escaped, on the 22nd, with its arms, baggage, and three pieces of cannon, forced its way through the city gates, and on the following morning entered Versailles, where the men were received with the greatest enthusiasm, and the officers promoted a step.

In the sitting of the 23rd, the Mayors of Paris presented themselves in the Assembly, with certain propositions for the re-establishment of order; and at eleven o'clock at night M. Armand read the following communication from the Mayors to the Assembly:—

"Gentlemen,—Paris is on the eve, not merely of an insurrection, but of civil war in all its worst horrors. The inhabitants await with unspeakable anxiety the adoption of measures calculated to prevent greater bloodshed than that which has already taken place. We are convinced that the triumph of order and the safety of the Republic require the following:—

"1st. That the Assembly should place itself in permanent communication with the Mayors of the capital by such means as it may deem best.

"2nd. That the Assembly should authorise the Mayors, when necessary, to take any steps that may be imperatively demanded by the public peril, subject to their subsequently rendering you an account of their proceedings, and being responsible to you for their acts.

"3rd. That the election of the General-in-Chief of the National Guards by the National Guards themselves should be fixed for the 28th of March.

"4th. That the elections for a Municipal Council in Paris should be held before the 3rd of April, if possible, and that the qualification required of a candidate should be simply six months' previous residence in Paris."

The Assembly declared the discussion of these suggestions to be urgent; but, whether in themselves wise or unwise, they had come too late. After a good deal of consideration in committee, and of public debating, the propositions fell through, and the whole question was left entirely to the discretion of the Government. In answer to an inquiry, M. Jules Favre said he was unable to furnish any explanation of the despatch transmitted to the Central Committee in Paris by General Schlottheim, but that he had himself received two more despatches from the German authorities—one from Berlin, the other from Rouen, and both making reservations which appeared of a threatening character. The enemy, he said, did not conceal the fact that he considered it to be the rigorous duty of the French Government to triumph over the seditious movement in Paris. The Germans, who had commenced withdrawing from several departments, had suspended their movements, and numerous complaints had been received from the territories occupied by the invaders, as the latter, seeing themselves in danger of having to turn back, punished the inhabitants by the most cruel exactions. It was therefore necessary, observed M. Favre, that the whole of France should know that it was the culpable rising in Paris that had consummated the country's misfortunes.

Two hasty manifestations of Republican fanaticism, the Government was compelled to neutralise in the final days of March. M. Rouher was restored to liberty, and the Prefect of Boulogne, who had arrested him, was dismissed; while the National Assembly passed a Bill declaring null and void the Bordeaux decree of M. Crémieux removing the fifteen magistrates who had supported Louis Napoleon after the *coup d'état*. The decree was a monstrous exercise of arbitrary power, and it was absolutely necessary to rescind it; but what a position does that Government assume which is frequently forced to retract its own spiteful and illegal acts!

CHAPTER XXVII.

The Morning of the 26th of March—The Elections for the Paris Commune—Success of the Central Committee—Resignation of their power into the Hands of the Citizens—Town and Country—False Democracy—Corruption of Morals in Paris—Discussions at Versailles—A Socialist Document—Proclamation of the Commune at the Hôtel de Ville—Unjust Accusations against the Versailles Government—Communications between the Revolutionists and the Prussians—Farewell Address of the Central Committee—Organisation of the Communal Administration—Leading Members of the Commune—Red Republican Boasting—Revolutionary Measures—Acts of Confiscation—Desolate Appearance of Paris—Money Losses caused by the State of Anarchy—Assassinations and Illegal Executions—Removal of the Post Office Staff to Versailles.

THE Communists were not to be turned from their settled designs; and they held the elections, as they said they would, on Sunday, the 26th of March. On the morning of that day, the editors of the *Journal des Débats* said they would not attend at a poll to which they had been summoned without right, for which there had been no time to prepare, and the meaning of which was not sufficiently established. Little did the Communists care for any such criticisms. They had got the upper hand, and they were determined to gild over their violence with a certain show of legality. The elections were rendered all the easier because of a proclamation in which the Mayors, Adjoints, and Deputies of the city joined with the members of the Central Committee in recommending this appeal to the Parisian constituencies as the only way of avoiding civil war and consolidating the Republic. "The inhabitants of Paris," said the proclamation, "comprehend that under the present circumstances they must all take part in the voting, so that it may have a serious character, which alone can ensure peace in the city." The day, when it came, was fine and summer-like. Voting went on until midnight, and the aspect of the city was tranquil and even gay. The National Guards favourable to the Versailles Government disbanded themselves after the retreat of their new commander, Admiral Saisset; and the Communist forces were thus left in entire possession of the field. The mouths of the cannons in the Carroussel and the Place de Grève were turned downwards in sign of peace. Crowds of holiday-makers were in the streets, and the revolutionary troops marched to and fro with the butt-ends of their rifles uppermost. At night, all the theatres were open, and people made up their minds to accept the new rule as unavoidable. No city so readily adapts itself to a change of government as Paris. A large number of Parisians did not like the Commune; but the Commune seemed to be established, and therefore it was to be quietly borne with. The *bourgeoisie* even professed a good deal of fraternal sympathy with the ultra-Republicans; but in secret, or wherever they could do so with safety, they exhibited the utmost distrust of their new masters, and manifested a strong desire to see them exterminated, or sent to Cayenne.

The Mayors, who had come back to Paris after their mission to Versailles, presided in their respective Mayoralties at the voting bureaux, which were constituted in accordance with the customs of the Empire. The abstentions were numerous, those who abstained forming the majority of the votes. Out of 500,000 qualified to vote, only 120,000 cast their bulletins into the urns. The number of abstentions varied a good deal, and was of course greatest in those arrondissements where the upper classes were the strongest; though, strange to say, there was a considerable defection in the district of Montmartre, the very cradle of the Communistical movement. This, however, did not arise from any receding on the part of the Red Republican population from the programme they had marked out; it was due to the very contrary. The extreme Republicans, with that tendency invariably found in French revolutionists to distrust their own agents directly they are invested with power, were already branding the men of the Central Committee as reactionary traitors. Nevertheless, the Committee obtained a great majority in that and the other revolutionary quarters. Twenty out of the thirty-seven members of the governing body were elected, and so were other Red Republicans. Blanqui was chosen three times; Pyat and Flourens twice. On the whole, this knot of unknown men, together with the few conspicuous revolutionists who as yet remained behind the scenes, and pulled the wires which set the puppets in motion, had won a decided success; but it was only because middle-class Paris, habitually timid, and left absolutely without leaders, was unable or unwilling to take any vigorous step against the dictators of the hour. In a proclamation issued on the evening of the 26th, the Central Committee resigned its self-assumed authority into the hands of the electors. The proclamation said:—

"Citizens,—Our mission is terminated. We are

about to cede our places in your Hôtel de Ville to the men newly elected by you—to those whom you have regularly entrusted with your confidence. Aided by your patriotism and devotion, we have been able to bring to a fortunate issue the difficult work undertaken in your name. Thanks to your persevering co-operation, solidarity is no longer a vain word; the safety of the Republic is now rendered certain. If our counsels can have any weight in your deliberations, allow your most zealous servants to make known to you before the balloting what they expect from your vote. Citizens, do not lose sight of the fact that the men who will serve you the best are those whom you choose from your midst, living your own life, suffering the same ills as you suffered. Distrust in an equal degree all those ambitious men who are one and all *parvenus*, who advise you only in their own interest, and who always end by considering themselves indispensable. Distrust also those talkers who are unable to pass from words to acts, and who will sacrifice everything to a speech, an oratorical effect, or a clever word. Also avoid those whom fortune has too greatly favoured, for it but seldom happens that he who possesses fortune is willing to look upon the working man as a brother. Seek men of sincere convictions, men of the people, resolute and active, who are well known for their sense of justice and honesty. Give your preference to these who do not canvass for your suffrages. The only true merit is modesty; it is for the electors to know their men, not for the candidates themselves to come forward. We are convinced that you will take notice of these observations, and you will at last have inaugurated a truly popular Representation; you will thus have found representatives who will never consider themselves your masters."

This address was moderate enough, and contained nothing at all objectionable; but the real objects of the Commune were not paraded in such documents. The *Official Journal*, of March 28th, shadowed forth a little more of the revolutionary design in an article which said:—"The first work of the newly-elected members ought to be the discussion and compilation of a charter—such a document as our ancestors of the middle ages called their 'Commune.' This done, they would be able to advise as to the means by which the Central Power would recognize and guarantee the statute of the municipal autonomy. This task will not be the less arduous if the movement is localised to Paris and one or two large towns, and allows the Assembly to continue in an office which good sense and the force of circumstances limited to the conclusion of peace. For one usurpation of power the Commune of Paris will not have to answer. Paris herself, federated with the Communes of France already enfranchised, ought, in her own name, in the names of Lyons and Marseilles, and soon perhaps of ten other large towns, to study the clauses of the contract which ought to bind them to the nation, and to lay down an ultimatum to the the treaty which they intend to sign. The ultimatum ought to contain a guarantee for their autonomy and reconquered municipal sovereignty; should secure free play for the connection existing between the Commune and the representatives of the national unity; and should impose upon the Assembly, if it accepts the treaty, the promulgation of an electoral law, by which the representatives of the towns shall not for the future be absorbed and, as it were, drowned by the representatives of the country districts. There must be an electoral law, conceived in that spirit. Should it not be applied, the national unity will be shattered, and the social equilibrium broken; and they will not be able to re-establish themselves. On these conditions only will an insurgent town again become the capital." A studied vagueness is apparent in this article, the meaning of which is sometimes not a little confused; but one thing is clear, and that is that the supporters of the Commune were determined, if possible, to establish some system by which the minority of the towns should be able to predominate over the majority of the country population. For many years past a most unfortunate and even fatal division had sprung up between the rural and urban population of France. Whatever the one desired and reverenced, the other detested and scorned. The provinces were monarchical, the towns republican; the provinces were religious, the towns atheistical; the provinces were pacific, the towns warlike; the provinces were in favour of individual property (the peasant being a small landholder), the towns were attracted by communistical and socialist schemes. No single ground of patriotism seemed possible for these bitter antagonists; and, as the country populations were narrow and bigoted, and the town populations aggressive and intolerant, the breach grew wider every day, and in 1871 the quarrel led to a civil war. The violence of Paris, Lyons, Marseilles, and the other chief centres of industry, proceeded in the main from the consciousness that they had hitherto been beaten by their own weapons. The very system of democracy which they themselves established had been turned against them; for, as the population of the country, including the small towns, which were purely rural in their feelings, greatly exceeded that of the large cities, it followed as a matter of course that, in an Assembly elected by universal suffrage, the latter were certain to be outvoted. Their object often, therefore, had been to devise some method by which they could counteract this numerical superiority, and enforce their own will upon the nation at large.

That this was grossly and absurdly inconsistent in politicians calling themselves democrats, and professing to take the will of the people as their law, requires no proof; but men are inconsistent beings where their interests clash with their principles. When democrats of this stamp talk of "the people," that is the very thing they do not mean, according to any reasonable interpretation of the word. They mean a section of the people; in short, they mean themselves. As long as the Red Republicans of the cities thought they could persuade or cajole the rural voters into carrying out the ideas of the towns, they were all for founding their Republic on an Assembly elected by the suffrages of the whole nation. It was then "the Republic One and Indivisible" that was to lead up to a golden future, and establish the solidarity of peoples. Now it was to be a Republic Many and Divided; or a Republic of the large cities controlling or coercing the provinces—of a minority over-riding the majority. In the article from the *Official Journal* of the Commune just quoted, it is said that the ultimatum of the Communal Government should include a demand for the passing of an electoral law by the Versailles Assembly, "by which the representatives of the towns should not for the future be absorbed and drowned by the representatives of the country districts." This could only have meant that universal suffrage should be abolished, or that the town constituencies should possess double votes, and so be enabled to neutralise the suffrages of the country. Even if such a system were right, it would be a misnomer to call it democracy. It would be a form of aristocracy—government by selection, government by privilege, government by a class supposed to be the best and choicest, that class being the



THE DUC D'AUMALE.



M. THIERS AND THE CORPS DIPLOMATIQUE.

judge in its own case, and the supreme arbiter of all other people's opinions.

Had the policy of the Communal reformers been confined to a demand for municipal freedom, so that Paris and the other cities might manage their purely local affairs without undue interference on the part of the central Government, and had this reform been urged in a peaceful and legal manner, there are but few Englishmen whose sympathies would not have been heartily on the side of the movement. But it is beyond dispute that the agitators desired to set up a class tyranny, with the design of revolutionising the whole structure of society, in their own interests, and against the interests and wishes of the greater number. To accomplish this purpose they plunged the land into civil war. To realise this dream they preached and practised assassination, outraged the moral sense of the world, and only yielded when Paris was wrapped in flames of their own kindling, and France was all but ruined.

If the Parisians and the citizens of the other revolutionary cities had exhibited any marked superiority over the provincial populations—any moral or intellectual predominance, any nobler form of character, any greater aptitude for the practical work of politics—there might be something to say for this claim to rule the whole of France; though even then it would be a question whether in these days any species of sectional government would be desirable, or capable of being maintained against the wishes of the mass. But the pretensions of Paris become doubly preposterous when it is seen that neither on intellectual nor on moral grounds have her turbulent citizens any right to assume the position of dictators towards the rest of the country. Of course the most intellectual Frenchmen gravitate towards Paris, as the most intellectual men of other lands seek their respective capitals, because they find there the conditions most favourable to their work. But the Parisians as a body are a race frivolous, sensual, cruel, effete, equally wanting in reverence and in sense, devoid of political capacity, wayward, passionate, childishly vain, and never satisfied without perpetual disruption, perpetual reconstruction, and perpetual pulling down again. The people of the provinces, though with the faults of superstition and of imperfect education, have many sterling qualities. Whatever is pure, simple, solid, respectable, and dignified in the France of the present day is to be found in the country populations. It was they who did the most to oppose the Prussian invasion; even in the defence of Paris, it was the provincial Mobiles who struck the hardest blows and stood the steadiest under fire, while it was the citizens of Belleville who vapoured and ran away.

The worst faults of Paris are seen in revolutionary seasons. They are, it is to be feared, ineradicable under the best of circumstances; but the Empire, if it did not encourage virtue, at any rate maintained decency. With the triumph of the revolution in September, every sort of foulness came forth. An American gentleman, who, as the citizen of a Republic, could have had no desire to misrepresent Republicans, said, in describing the state of Paris a few weeks after the fall of the Empire:—"The most grossly obscene *brochures* are cried upon the Boulevards by young women and little children. Some of these are so abhorrent that one feels, upon glancing at them, that no calamity could be too great for a city which has neither written law nor Lynch law equal to the task of removing so odious an abomination. In the shop-windows of the most unfrequented streets in the most licentious cities of Italy or Spain, you will see nothing more villainously filthy than the caricature I saw an hour ago, dealt out to merry purchasers on the Boulevard by an equally merry young woman of about eighteen years of age, with a pretty and unblushing face. Books make their appearance in the shop-windows, which heretofore were concealed under the shop-counters; and engravings, which formerly were only shown to the initiated on the sly, are now within reach of the lads and lasses who accompany their mamma or the servant. A shopkeeper said to me, 'Let me show you how rapidly we are progressing.' And, pulling out a pile of *cartes de visite*, he continued, 'Look on the back of it. That is the name of the most fastidious photographer in the city. Before the war, he would have prosecuted the man who should have charged him with publishing such a picture; and even upon *cartes* of the ordinary departures from decorum he would not have put his name. Then as to selling, any shop that should have been caught selling such a picture as this would have been closed, and its proprietor punished.'"*

M. Thiers, speaking in the Versailles Assembly on the 27th—the day following the Communal elections in Paris—observed that no city, however distinguished or however glorious, had the right to govern the rest of France. He called on the Assembly, however, to vote as speedily as possible the Bill for Municipal Elections, adding:—"We desire liberty for Paris, and for the whole of France; but we wish also for union. All that human foresight can do for the re-establishment of

* "Shut up in Paris." By Nathan Sheppard. 1871.

order will be done, and the authority of the law will be upheld. I do not conceal from myself the attacks which are directed against the attitude I have assumed, and to which the Assembly has given in its adhesion. But that which does most honour to a political assembly is a grave demeanour, and there is nothing more dignified than silence, when principles do not thereby suffer." The Minister solemnly denied the repeated statements that he intended to overthrow the Republic. He said:—"I give a formal contradiction to those who accuse me of leading the way for a Monarchical settlement. I found the Republic an accomplished fact; before God and man I declare I will not betray it, and that those who say the contrary speak falsely. The maintenance of order and the reconstruction of the country are my sole aims; victory will rest with the most wise; it will be the prize of reason, and France will issue from her trials in all her eternal grandeur." In the course of the discussion, a deputy demanded urgency for a proposition that the Assembly should declare the Paris elections of the previous day null and void. Another deputy said that to adopt this would be a declaration of civil war. A division was immediately taken on the subject, and, although a large number of the Right voted in the affirmative, the proposal was rejected by an overwhelming majority.

That civil war was inevitable, however, was every day becoming more obvious. The Government, in an official announcement on the 28th of March, said that it had temporised up to that point, in order to avoid the shedding of blood, but that it had not been inactive, and was then ready. As the designs of the Communists came more clearly into view, the necessity of dealing sternly with so menacing a danger was impressed with ever-increasing force on the minds of Frenchmen generally. The determination of the new rulers of Paris to seize the property of capitalists was evinced in many ways. One of the most unequivocal announcements of this nature was the publication, by the "Syndical Chamber of Stonemasons and Stonesawyers," of a manifesto (printed on red paper), in which they said:—"In answer to the call that the country was in danger, we have taken up arms. That was our duty now that we are overtaken by misery and leprosy. We can only better our future by a sublime effort. The difficult epoch we are passing through must have brought us to serious reflection on the subject of our social position as workmen. We must ask ourselves whether we, the producers, ought to allow those who do not produce anything to live at ease; whether the system which has been pursued till now is destined to exist for all time, even when it is entirely opposed to us. Let us prove by our attachment to the sacred cause of Democracy that we are worthy of all the consideration due to us. To our task, then, fellow-workmen! for our employers only think at this moment how to profit by our misery, in order to extort still more from us, if possible. If we are true to ourselves, we shall check their base rapacity." This address was posted up in the neighbourhood of the Hôtel de Ville on the 22nd of March, the day on which the insurgent National Guards fired on the party of order; and, though not emanating from the leaders of the Commune, it was the production of men in league with them.

On the evening of the 26th, some of the Communal Guards let off fireworks in the Place de l'Etoile, to do honour to the results of the voting, which it was by that time evident would be in favour of the new rule. The Tuileries was thrown open, and a number of orators mounted on pedestals from which the statues had been removed, and addressed the people on the historical events of the edifice, interspersing their anecdotes with coarse abuse of the Emperor and Empress. At four o'clock on the afternoon of the 28th, the Commune was proclaimed in the Place of the Hôtel de Ville, where a platform, covered with red cloth, was erected before the chief entrance. The members of the Communal Council who had been elected were assembled on the platform, which was adorned with a bust representing the Republic, on the head of which was the Phrygian Cap of Liberty, ornamented with red ribbons. Round the platform, and in the square, the tricolour alternated with the red flag—a concession to the Moderate party which, under the circumstances, was remarkable. The Place itself, and the neighbouring streets and quays, were filled with a dense mass of National Guards, who again and again raised their caps in the air on the points of their bayonets, and uttered loud shouts of "Long live the Republic!" Salvoes of artillery were fired, and sixty guns were placed in position so as to defend the square from any possible attack directed from the adjoining streets. A Communal Council being now formed, the Central Committee resigned their powers into its hands, and the *Official Journal* thereupon issued the following proclamation:—

"Citizens!—Your Commune is constituted. The vote of the 26th of March sanctions the victorious Revolution. A power which was basely the aggressor you have taken by the throat, and have, in your legitimate defence, driven from your walls a Government which desired to dishonour you by imposing upon you

a King. To-day, the criminals, whom you have not even wished to pursue, abuse your magnanimity by organising at the gates of your city and at your hearth a monarchical conspiracy. They invoke civil war. They set to work all that corruption can accomplish. They accept all accomplices, and have been forced to beg assistance even of the foreigner. We arraign these wretches before the judgment of France and of the world.

"Citizens!—You are about to establish institutions which defy all attempts at overthrowing them. You are the masters of your own destinies. Strong in the representation you are about to establish, you will repair the disaster caused by the overthrown Power. Industry compromised, work suspended, commercial transactions paralysed, will receive a vigorous impulse, and to-day the expected decision on the question of the rent, to-morrow that on the maturity of commercial bills, our public services re-established and simplified, the National Guard henceforth the only armed force of the city—these will be our first acts. The elected of the people only ask of the people, in order to assure the triumph of the Republic, to be supported by their confidence so long as they do their duty."

The accusation against the Government that they desired to impose a King on the country seems to have been utterly unjust. A rumour was circulated in Paris to the effect that the Duke d'Aumale had been appointed Lieutenant-General of the "kingdom;" but for this there was not the slightest foundation. Whatever the faults of M. Thiers, he was certainly true to the Republican form of government with which he had allied himself. He must often have thought with some revulsion of feeling of his recent saying about the Republic being the Government which divided France the least; but at any rate he did not abuse his power to overthrow what he found in a certain sense established. It was one of the easy devices of the Commune to represent the Versailles Government as intent upon a monarchical restoration; but even when the Commune was suppressed, the throne was not re-established in France. M. Thiers, in fact, had no motive for any such proceeding. He wished to retain the supreme power in his own hands.

It was scarcely more truthful to say that the Government of M. Thiers had "begged assistance of the foreigner." Some notes had been exchanged between M. Jules Favre and the German authorities with respect to possible eventualities; but no military assistance had been actually requested, and none was rendered during the whole course of the civil war. The charge was a peculiarly injudicious one for the Communists to bring, for they themselves lie under grave suspicion of having been ready to make themselves the humble servants of Prussia in exchange for Prussian support. The furious diatribes against all Germans in which the Red Republicans had indulged during the war, and in the early days of the peace, were succeeded by many courteous professions in the *Official Journal* of the Commune, and by a marked solicitude that nothing should be done to offend or inconvenience the victorious army of the Emperor William. On the other hand, the Prussians showed every disposition to be of service to the revolutionists. Some time after the suppression of the Commune, the *Constitutionnel* alluded to a document which had reached the hands of the Minister of War, and which consisted of a letter addressed by the Prussian authorities to the delegates of the Commune at the War Department. This letter offered considerable quantities of flour, chassepôts, and bayonet-sabres, at certain stipulated prices. A sample of the proposed flour was enclosed. The Abbé Lamazou, in his little personal history of the Commune, called "The Place Vendôme and La Roquette," quotes this story, and adds:—"For my part, I am fully convinced—and my conviction is founded on extensive evidence and documents—that, during the first seven weeks of the Commune's sway, the Prussians gave it their moral and material support. When the period of murders and fire came, the Prussian generals became alarmed at the crimes of the demagogues, whose origin and place of birth they well knew to be cosmopolitan rather than Parisian or French. It was then, and then alone, that, to the great mortification of the Commune, they gave up all intercourse with its agents. But it was not at all the same with the subaltern officers and soldiers. I know more than one Parisian who saw them on the heights of Montmorency and Sannois dancing for joy when they saw Paris on fire." * If these allegations are correct, it is clear that the Communists were eager to accept the alliance of the Prussians, and that the Prussians were equally desirous of giving it. One thing is certain—that while the new governing Power eagerly declared the incompatibility of a seat in its ranks with a seat in the National Assembly, it announced that a foreigner might enjoy the privilege, and confirmed the election of M. Frankel, a Prussian, who happened also to be a member of the International Association.

Before relinquishing their functions to the Communal Council on the 28th, the Central Committee issued the following proclamation:—

"Citizens! - To-day we have been permitted to assist at the grandest popular spectacle which has ever met our eyes, which has ever moved our hearts. Paris

* Authorised Translation by C. F. Audley. 1872.

greeted and applauded her revolution. Paris opened a fresh and blank leaf of history, and inscribed her great name on it. Two hundred thousand freemen have come forward to assert their liberty and to proclaim the new constitution amidst the roar of cannon. Let the spies of Versailles who prowl about our walls report to their masters what voices issue forth from the breast of an entire population; how they fill the whole city, and resound beyond her walls. Let these spies who have sneaked into our ranks give them a faithful image of this magnificent spectacle—a people resuming its sovereignty, sublimely and ambitiously crying aloud, 'We will die for our country.'

"Citizens!—We replace in your hands the work you confided to us. At the last moment of our ephemeral power, before we definitively resume our places in the Committee of the National Guard from which events called us forth, we wish to return you our thanks. Aided in our task by your admirable patriotism and by your wisdom, we have, without violence, but without weakness, accomplished the conditions of our task. Fettered in our march by the loyalty which prohibited us from assuming government, we have nevertheless been able, by leaning on you, to prepare a radical revolution within eight days. Our actions are known to you, and it is with the pride of having accomplished our duty that we submit them to your judgment. But, before passing the ordeal of your opinion, we wish to say that any good which has been effected has been done through you. We further wish to proclaim aloud that you, as absolute and lawful masters, have established your power principally by your generosity. If you have brought forward claims and demands, you have never retaliated. France, guilty of twenty years' weakness, feels the necessity of regeneration, of redemption from past tyranny and indolence, by means of calm liberty and hard work. Your liberties will be energetically defended by your elect of to-day; they will consecrate them for ever. Work depends upon yourselves, and bears its own reward. Rally, therefore, round your Commune with confidence; facilitate its labours by devoting yourselves to the necessary reforms. Brethren amongst yourselves, be guided by brethren. March firmly and bravely on the road of the future. Give an example to others by showing them the value of liberty, and you will assuredly arrive at the intended goal—the Universal Republic."

This proclamation was signed by the following members of the Central Committee:—Avoine Fils, Ant. Arnauld, G. Arnold, Assi, Andignoux Bourt, Jules Bergeret, Babick, Barond, Billioray, Blanchet, L. Boursier, Castioni, Chonteau, C. Dupont, Fabre, Ferrat, Henri Fortune, Fleury, Fougeret, C. Gandier, Goutrier, H. Geresme, Grolard, Grolier, Jourde, Josselin, Lavalette, Maljournal, St. Moreau, Mortier, Prudhomme, Rousseau, Ranvier, Varlin, A. Du Camp. Although ostensibly surrendering their powers as a Government, the Committee did not disband, but continued to exercise considerable influence on the progress of affairs.

The Commune now proceeded to the appointment of an Executive Committee of seven members, and to the formation of nine governing sections—Finance, War, Justice, Public Safety, Subsistence, Education, Labour and Exchange, Foreign Department, and Municipal Administration and Public Services. The following was the organisation of these several bodies:—

Executive Committee—Citizens Eudes, Bridon, Vaillant, Duval, Lefrançais, Félix Pyat, Bergeret.

Finance Committee—Citizens Victor Clemen, Farlin, Tourde, Beslay, Régère.

Military Committee—Citizens Pindy, Eudes, Bergeret, Duval, Chardon, Flourens, Ranvier.

Judicial Committee—Citizens Ranc, Protot, Leo Meillet, Vermorel, Ledroit, Babick.

Committee of Public Safety—Citizens Raoul Rigault, Serie, Assi, Cournet, Oudet, Chalain, Girardin.

Committee of Ways and Means—Citizens Dereure, Champy, Ostyn, Clement, Parizel, Emile Clement, Fortune, Henry.

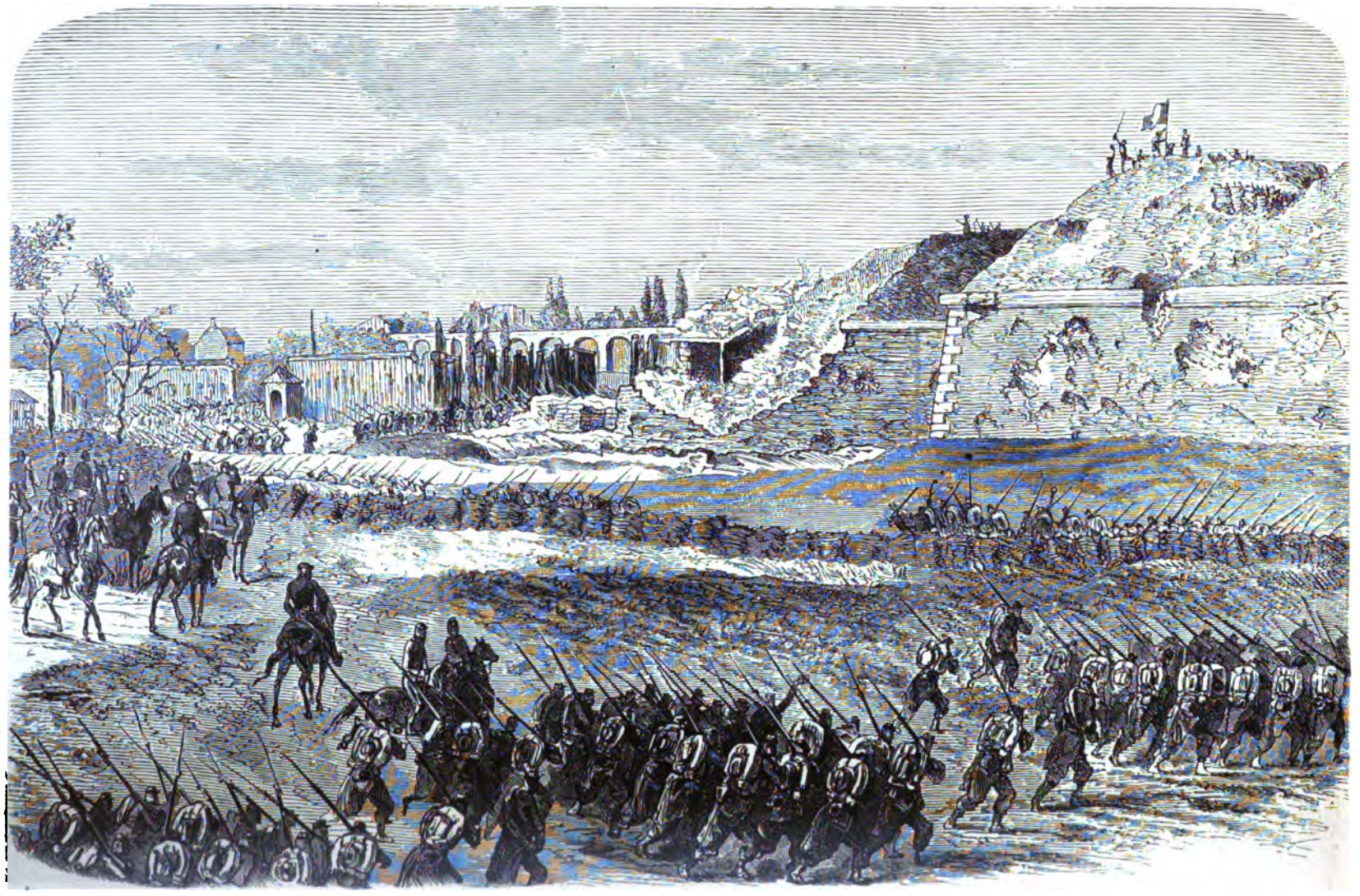
Committee of Public Works, Manufactures, and Trade—Citizens Malon, Frankel, Eheisz, Dupont, Avrail, Loiseau, Tinson, Puget, Eug. Girardin.

Committee of Foreign Relations—Citizens Delescluze, Ranc, Paschal Grousset, Ulysse Parent, Arthur Arnould, Ant. Arnauld, Ch. Girardin.

Committee of Public Service—Citizens Ostyn, Billioray, Clement (T. B.), Mardelet, Mortier, Rastoul.

Educational Committee—Citizens Jules Vallès, Docteur Goupil, Lefèvre, Urbain, Albert Leroy, Verdure, Dernay, Docteur Robinet.

It will be seen that some of these names correspond with those of members of the Central Committee, so that the connection between the two bodies was not broken. The Abbé Lamazou, in the work already quoted, said that among the members of the Commune there were 12 journalists, 4 common schoolmasters, 4 barristers, 2 apothecaries, 5 painters, 2 architects, 2 engineers, 6 clerks belonging to commercial houses or to Government offices, 1 sculptor, 2 tradesmen, 1 journeyman jeweller, 1 journeyman carver, 1 journeyman printer, 2 journeymen bookbinders, 2 journeymen dyers, 2 journeymen shoemakers, 1 journeyman hatter, 5 journeymen in the engineering service, 1 tinker, 1 basketmaker, 1 joiner, 1 cashier, 1 hairdresser, and 3 proprietors. The three last-mentioned (says the same authority) were the citizens Théodore Régère de Montmore, who owned some small lands in the south of France; Pottier, the proprietor of a large bathing establishment near the Bank; and the Commandant Brunel. The well-known members of the Commune were M. Félix Pyat, the editor of the *Vengeur;* M. Ranc, a functionary of the Gambetta Government at Tours



ATTACK ON PARIS BY THE VERSAILLES TROOPS.

and Bordeaux; Gustave Flourens, one of the heroes of the movement of October 31st, and son of a *savant* of the Institute; M. Protot, an advocate; M. Leo Meillet, a Mayor, who had been very influential in obtaining the release of General Chanzy, and who received the thanks of the Assembly for his efforts in that cause; M. Paschal Grousset, the young Corsican whose challenge to Prince Pierre Buonaparte, in January, 1870, led to the death of his representative, M. Victor Noir; M. Arthur Arnould, formerly a writer in the *Marseillaise;* M. Jules Vallès, of the *Diable à Quatre;* M. Delescluze, a prominent Red Republican; and M. Ulysse Parent, a young man of fortune, who had for some time been on intimate terms with the revolutionary party. The great majority of the Communal administrators were persons of humble birth; but these belonged to the educated circles, and were men with positions to lose.

On the election of the Communal Council, the Mayors of the fourth and ninth arrondissements, and M. Clémenceau, Mayor of Montmartre, resigned their posts, on the ground that the appointment of this local Parliament changed the character of the powers and functions of the Mayors of arrondissements. The red flag now waved over all the public buildings in Paris; and at the first sitting of the Council a resolution was adopted, declaring that the National Guard and the Central Committee had deserved well of the country and the Republic. The *Nouvelle République* demanded immediate action of the Commune, and said, in its issue of March 29th:—"Do not forget that a Government, rotten, factious, and discredited, is still enthroned.



THE DUC DE CHARTRES.

with threats against us on its lips, in the Château of Versailles. Assi, in his speech yesterday in front of the Hôtel de Ville, observed :—'We have to-day the reform which we had already obtained on the 31st of October, and which sacrilegious hands took from us. Woe to him who should venture afresh to cōnspire against the great result achieved!' Ramier, in his speech, said :—'After so many misfortunes, one thing still remains to us, and that is faith in our principles, and the affirmation of our rights in the presence of the wretches of Versailles and Berlin, and of every place where there is a crown.'" Such were the official and semi-official utterances of the Red Republican party. They boded no good to any who should venture to hold a different opinion. The favourite national habit of boasting came out very strongly in some of these revolutionary organs. In the *Vengeur*, for instance, Citizen Félix Pyat, now one of the Executive Committee of the Communal Council, exclaimed :—"The foreigner has up to the present time only conquered the Empire. William has beaten Buonaparte. The Royal army took the Imperial army prisoner. It has not yet captured the red flag. The breath of '92 agitates its folds and animates its soldiers. The enemy has not yet had to do with the people. He will look twice before he does. The Prussian will not confront them. He marched down to the Louvre, but he did not ascend to Montmartre. He occupied Versailles, but he did not take Belleville." The same political philosopher wrote :—"The Republic does not treat with the enemy on its territory. Let Royalists do that. Let the rurals return to their fields. Every one to his business, and let the rurals take care of their cows. The Assembly must either evacuate Versailles or be expelled from it. The people is strong enough and moderate enough to give them their choice. But they must make haste, for their allies are falling away from them. Yes; the people is so strong that the reaction submits, or rather it rallies. The reaction begins to recognise the Commune; the blind now see the sun." This ridiculous rhodomontade, with a great deal more of the same kind, was accompanied by the usual intolerance of all other views. Several papers were suppressed; and the Commune soon proved that it could be quite as arbitrary as the most tyrannical of Kings or Emperors.

Of law there was a complete suspension. No tribunals or courts sat at the Palais de Justice. The judges had all vanished. Since the 4th of September, no fewer than 35,000 law cases had been in abeyance, comprising inheritance, dissolution of partnerships, common actions at law, divorce cases, and numerous others. The new authorities were equally resolved that there should be no police. It was decided that police agents should be done away with, that all special services for upholding the public safety and morals should be temporarily suppressed, and that they should only be restored if required for ensuring tranquillity, and even then with important modifications. At the same time, all the prisoners in gaol were released, with the exception of those who had committed offences against the Revolution. Religious observances soon shared the fate of law and police. Orders were issued that all chaplains were to cease celebrating mass in the prisons to which they were attached. The religious services in the Pantheon were abolished; the arms of the crosses on the top of the dome and in front of the church were sawn off; the red flag floated from different parts of the building; and a grand military ceremony was held there, in order to devote the edifice exclusively to the reception of "the great men of France." It was also decreed that Church and State should be separated, that the religious budget should be suppressed, and that all estates formerly belonging to religious bodies should be regarded as national property. These last three measures, however, were comparatively moderate; and the policy they represented is one which is being rapidly adopted by the Liberal opinion of Europe. The great objection to any such action being taken in the present instance was that a purely local body—a Municipal Council—was assuming to itself the powers of a National Parliament. But the pretence under which the Commune first made its appearance, that it wished to concern itself solely with local affairs, and had no desire to dictate to the country at large, soon passed from sight. When it had served its turn, it was flung aside, and the Paris Council openly took in hand to settle questions, the determination of which was the prerogative of the nation.

The desirability of a remission of rents had been much agitated just before the establishment of the Commune; and as soon as the insurgents had succeeded in grasping power, it was foreseen that they would take some step of this nature. They did so with great alacrity. On the 29th the Council issued a decree, in which, on the ground that work, industry, and commerce had supported all the charges of the war, and that it was just to exact from property its share of sacrifices, it was ordained that a general remission should be made to tenants of the rents due in the term of October, 1870, and in the terms of January and April, 1871; that all sums paid by tenants during those nine months should be set off against the

terms to come; that remission should likewise be made of the sums due for furnished apartments; that leases might be cancelled at the option of the tenants during a space of six months from the date of the decree; and that all notices to quit should, on the demand of the tenant, be prorogued for three months. The principle thus embodied was not new to French politics; but, in the measure now promulgated by the Commune, no provision was made for repaying to the holders of house property the sums thus abstracted from them. It was assumed that they had contributed nothing towards the expenses of the war, and it was ordered that they should suffer for the advantage of others. That the act would operate with great harshness in many instances, where the landlords were themselves far from wealthy, did not in the least deter the Communal Council from issuing their decree. It was part of their policy that property was to be divided for the enrichment of labour.

Another decree of the same date suspended the sale of pledges at the Mont-de-Piété; while a third declared that, the Commune being now the sole power, the staffs of the different public services were thenceforth to hold as null and void any orders or communications emanating from the Government of Versailles or its adherents, and that every functionary or servant who did not conform to the decree would be immediately dismissed. The military affairs of the Commune were regulated by an ordinance which stated that the conscription was abolished; that no military force other than the National Guard could be created in Paris or introduced there; and that all able-bodied citizens must enter the National Guard. Committees, called "Committees of Subsistence," were formed, the object of which was to investigate the condition of the arrondissements, and to ascertain what amount of requisitions could be extracted from each. The Communal authorities were not backward in seizing the property of others. One day they took possession of the produce of the fish auction, to the value of 20,000 francs; another day, a flock of a hundred and fifty sheep, coming into Paris, was appropriated by a body of National Guards, who declared that they had need of it. A hundred men of the same force marched into an eating-house, and demanded dinner. It was supplied, and the proprietor received in exchange a promise to pay. In the name of public health, warm baths were "requisitioned" for the citizen soldiery. Books, valued at 2,000 francs, were taken by force from the shop of a military publisher, for their instruction. A loan was violently extracted from five insurance companies, the Communal authorities breaking open safes, setting seals upon them, and taking such funds as they required. These lawless acts spread gloom and apprehension throughout the city. The streets were almost forsaken, except by the triumphant National Guards; very few carriages were to be seen, and the *cafés* and restaurants were deserted. The Bourse, which was shut throughout the week ending on the 25th of March, half opened its doors again in the following week, but did little or no business. So great was the depreciation of stock that Three per Cent. French Rentes were quoted lower than during the worst period of the siege. Manufactures were at a standstill; shops were closed in sheer despair of getting custom; workmen, used to idleness, and to the amusement of a quasi-military life, rejected all offers to return to their daily avocations. The number of persons who left the capital during the ten days ending the 30th of March, was estimated at upwards of 160,000. The octroi duties at the gates of Paris, which generally yielded 300,000 francs a day, now reached no higher than 80,000. A writer from the city said that the word "business" would soon be banished from the French language, and that men seemed to do nothing but eat and drink—especially the latter. The *Figaro*, alluding to the serious money loss inflicted on the community by the prolongation of the revolutionary crisis, contended that, besides the persons belonging to the wealthy classes who had left the town, there were 200,000 foreigners who would have gone there to enjoy the season, and examine the results of the siege; and that consequently Paris was deprived of a very large sum of money which would otherwise have been spent among her population. The leaders of the Commune, however, were far too exalted for such vulgar considerations. Who would think about trade and commerce when the great principle of human fraternity was being established by blood and plunder?

Encouraged by success, the chiefs of the Red Republican party clamoured for extreme measures. Félix Pyat contended that the Commune should decree the dissolution of the Assembly, and treat its members as insurgents. Assassinations, called executions, were frequent. Besides the persons killed on the Place Vendôme, thirty-three men (according to a correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*) were put to death, in the latter days of March, on the most frivolous pretexts. Three of these were shot by National Guards at Belleville, because the latter did not admire the way they were dressed. One of the most shocking events of the time was the execution of an old man, seventy-

eight years of age, named Bignon, who, some half century before, had denounced and caused the execution of four sergeants at La Rochelle, accused of political offence. Bignon was recognised in the Rue de Rivoli by a grandson of one of the sergeants, named Pommier. The young man was sitting before a *café*, chatting with a friend, when he suddenly and abruptly rose, went up to a man who was passing by, and said he arrested him as the person who had denounced the four sergeants. After a few words had been exchanged, Bignon disengaged himself from the grasp of his assailant, and ran away, but was recaptured by the crowd, who wished to shoot him on the spot. Young Pommier, however, interposed, saying that the man belonged to the justice of the land, and that the magistrates of the Republic must pass sentence on him. He was then conducted to the Mairie of the fourth arrondissement, and was afterwards put to death.

Another circumstance which tended to throw Paris more completely into anarchy was the suspension of postal communication. M. Rampont, director of the Post Office—to whose energy the balloon service and pigeon service of the siege were due—was superseded by a nominee of the Commune, by trade a chaser of metals. The former said that, if compelled to leave, he would secede to Versailles with his staff and material; and this he actually did. A large number of commercial men held a meeting on the 31st of March, and, in reply to their request for explanations, the official representatives of the Commune stated that everything that was possible had been done to prevent any interruption of the communications. "But," they added, "Rampont appears to have taken advantage of the Committee's confidence, and to have sent away to Versailles all the conveyances and boxes used by the administration. The Communal Council, receiving warning too late, only issued orders yesterday for the arrest of M. Rampont; but when the agents of the Commune reached the Post Office for that purpose, they found neither M. Rampont nor his clerks, neither registers nor postal cases, not even the Post Office vans." The *Cri du Peuple* loudly demanded the punishment of M. Rampont for disturbing order, and for complicity with the "insurgents" of Versailles. But the offender was beyond the power of the Communal Council, and the new authorities could only promise that they would organise a fresh service as speedily as possible.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Determination of M. Thiers to take Action against Paris—Despatch of Troops from Versailles to Neuilly (April 2nd)—Combat with the National Guards—Mutinous Soldiers—Defeat of the Communal Forces—General Characteristics of the Action—Alleged Cruelty of the Versailles Troops—Excitement in Paris—Preparations for fresh Fighting—Quality of the National Guards—Renewal of the Combat on April 3rd—Sanguinary Conflicts—The Fire of Mont Valérien—Discomfiture of the Insurgent Forces—Ignorance of Military Science on the Part of the Communist Generals—Desperate Flight of the Insurgent Troops—Fighting on the 4th—Death of Gustave Flourens—Ferocious Treatment of Prisoners by the Versailles Troops—Suppression of Newspapers by the Commune—Threatened Reprisals—Anxiety in Paris—Proceedings of the Communal Government—Manifesto of M. Millière—Disaffection of Lullier and Rochefort—Money Smuggled out of Paris—Unsuccessful Attempt to establish the Commune in Marseilles.

M. THIERS was not long in relinquishing his emphatically-declared determination, never, under any circumstances, to send an army against Paris. It was indeed impossible to adhere to such a resolution. The rebels were increasing in boldness every day. The more fiery spirits were clamouring for active measures against the National Government at Versailles; and it was evident that their influence would soon prevail. Compromises had been sought, and not found, owing chiefly to the haughty and unconciliating tone adopted by the Communal leaders. Civil war had in fact set in from the very day when the rebels successfully resisted General Vinoy's attempt to take possession of the guns. Two Governments had been established in France; and however much, in the first instance, each side had shrunk from making an attack (whether from fear or from humanity), nothing could be more certain than that this state of things could not continue long, and that one Power or the other must endeavour to overwhelm its opponent, and obtain the mastery. Had M. Thiers not attacked the Commune, the Commune would very soon have attacked M. Thiers. Its agents were already doing their utmost to revolutionise the large towns. A Government arrogating to itself, not merely Municipal but National powers, was established in Paris, and it had been declared

that the object of this Government was to inaugurate a new social state by a violent subversion of the old. The Administration of M. Thiers was therefore challenged to the fight; and the first serious move in response to that challenge was made on Sunday, April 2nd, although preparations for active measures had been going on for some time previously.

Ten thousand troops, chiefly *gendarmerie*, were on that day marched from Versailles towards Neuilly, a village to the north-west of Paris, situated on the Seine, about half a league on the road to St. Germain-en-Laye, and not far from the fortifications of the capital. The forces were divided into two columns—one passing by the road to Rueil, the other by the strategic road from St. Cloud to Mont Valérien; but the whole body was re-combined further on. At ten o'clock in the morning the division of General Bruat opened an artillery fire on a body of 1,500 National Guards of the Commune, who were advancing from Neuilly, and some of whose regiments had got as far as Puteaux. Whether this was the beginning of the collision, or whether the fire was preceded by some action on the part of the Communal forces, is uncertain. The rebels said that the Versailles troops fired first, and killed an officer; but on the other side it was asserted that the first man killed was a Versailles *parlementaire*, a doctor, who was shot by a National Guard on the supposition that he was a spy, and was going to draw a revolver. The account of the matter given by a correspondent of the *Morning Advertiser* seems to bear the character of truth. It states that when General Vinoy and his Staff arrived at Mont Valérien they perceived no hostile movement in advance. Accordingly, Surgeon-Major Pasquier, of the Gendarmerie, volunteered to go towards the bridge of Neuilly with a trumpeter and a flag of truce, to open negotiations with the insurgents, in the hope of persuading them to come to terms, and thus save the country from the shame and misery of civil war. "He was at once," continues the writer, "invited to join the insurrection, a proposition which he declared to be utterly impossible; whereupon one of the National Guards drew out his revolver, fired point-blank at the officer, and shot him dead through the head. Surgeon Pasquier appears to have been much beloved. His corpse was carried back to his comrades, and roused them to vengeance. The very soldiers who were most suspected of an inclination to join the insurrectionary camp were inflamed with indignation against the insurgents. The news sped like the fiery cross through the ranks, and the troops cried aloud to be led against the foe." The Gendarmerie were then sent forward in the direction of the bridge of Neuilly, but were received with so terrible a discharge from the insurgents, who were posted behind a barricade, that they were compelled to fall back for reinforcements. Hereupon, the National Guards, fancying that an easy victory might be obtained, left the shelter of their defensive works, and followed the retreating Gendarmerie, but were encountered by some of the Pontifical Zouaves, headed by Colonel Charrette, some Chasseurs de Vincennes, and a number of troops of the Line. The regulars are stated to have behaved extremely well, with the exception of one regiment, about a hundred men belonging to which went over to the enemy, uttering shouts in favour of the Commune. Others were about to follow this example when their comrades seized them, and they were at once shot by General Vinoy's orders. The Zouaves are said to have advanced to the charge with cries of "Long live the King!" The fixed bayonets and onward rush of these warriors produced a panic among the rebels, and they took to flight with the utmost precipitation.

It appears probable that the Communists planned and sought the engagement; for, when met by the regular army, they were advancing from Paris in a south-westerly direction, and seem therefore to have meditated an attack on their adversaries. The forward movement in the contrary direction, ordered by the General Commanding-in-Chief at Versailles, appears to have been resolved on in consequence of reports received at head-quarters; and the result was an action in which the National Guards were thoroughly worsted. The latter were driven into Courbevoie, which for a short time they held by keeping up a fire from the windows. Ultimately, however, they were shelled out of this position by field-pieces from Mont Valérien. They then fell back on the bridge of Neuilly, where for some time they kept up a hot fusillade; but, being again forced to retire, they withdrew into Paris, and shut the gates. The Versailles troops fought well, and, with the exception of the regiment of the Line which, at a critical moment of the action, cried "Long live the Commune!" the loyalty of the men was unquestionable. The National Guards, in their flight, exclaimed that they were "betrayed," having been sent out to fight without artillery or chassepôts. Their losses do not seem to have been very serious; but blood had been drawn, and a certain proportion of killed and wounded lay on the ground.

Only a part of the forces on both sides was engaged; but the Versailles troops, being provided with cannon and mitrailleuses, of which the insurgents had none, were enabled to do far the greatest

execution. The National Guards, in retreating over the bridge of Neuilly, were exposed to a terrible fire of artillery, and, on regaining Paris, were pursued by shells from Mont Valérien. Some of these fell within the walls; upon which the crowds that were standing about, looking on, scattered in all directions, shouting, "They are going to bombard Paris!" The insurgent troops who were left behind in Courbevoie and Neuilly were easily disarmed by the Versailles soldiers, but it is said that many prisoners were shot. On the subject of these executions there was a good deal of conflicting testimony. A correspondent of the *Times*, described a visit he had made to the scene of the fighting shortly after it was over, said:—"At the Round Point of Courbevoie were five bodies of Mobiles, said to have been shot after they had surrendered. There was a large crowd of men and women round them, furiously exasperated against the Versailles Government. One woman, who was crying bitterly, declared that numerous other prisoners had been not only shot, but first treated with the grossest cruelty by the gendarmes. The bodies of most of them have been taken to Mont Valérien, which was occupied by the Marine Brigade, the Gendarmerie, and the Line. Eye-witnesses declared that General Vinoy himself had been there, and had ordered all the National Guards found there, whether armed or unarmed, to be shot immediately. This was after the Versailles *parlementaire* had been shot. . . . . The popular exasperation at these executions was very great. But still a great many declared that they would not fight against Frenchmen; that there ought to be no bloodshed or civil war. A patrol came down from Mont Valérien—the first Versailles troops I had seen—to look for the bodies of the Mobiles executed. They took no notice of the crowd, which silently made way for them. I returned with them up towards Mont Valérien. Suresnes was strongly occupied by Versailles troops of the Line. I passed on to the river, and, a little further on to the left, found Communist outposts all along the road to Pont Neuilly. The two armies were thus close to each other. The bridge was again occupied by the Communists, who, as I passed, were mustering from Paris in great numbers. The *rappel* was beating." Amongst other reports of an appalling nature was a horrible story of a girls' school, all the members of which, as they were coming out of church at Neuilly, were cut to pieces by shot and shell. It afterwards appeared, however, that there was only one girl wounded, and that of course was accidental. The prisoners summarily executed were probably soldiers of the Line who had deserted.



A BARRICADE ABANDONED.



THE AFFAIR OF APRIL 17TH.

The loyal troops, although decidedly victorious, did not venture to follow up their success by crossing the bridge of Neuilly, but withdrew, leaving the great road to Mont Valérien quite open, although the adjacent villages were occupied. This was some consolation to the Communists in their trouble; for it could not have been willingly, but rather owing to a want of sufficient force at the time, that the Versailles general allowed the National Guards to re-cross the Seine, and occupy positions on the road to the seat of Government. What with grief at their losses, and extravagant anticipations of future victory, the Parisians were in a state of the wildest excitement on the evening of that Sunday. The National Guards were under arms; and at five o'clock the Boulevards, and all the streets leading to the Champs Elysées, were filled with them. Guns and mitrailleuses were being dragged towards the west, and at least 100,000 men stood ready for combat. But for some time there was great hesitation as to what should be done with them. The cooler and more prudent among their leaders counselled a policy of defence; others advised an immediate advance on Versailles. So much uncertainty as to the actual results of the fighting prevailed in Paris during the day that, at three in the afternoon, one of the insurgent generals made a speech from a balcony of the Ministry of War in the Place Vendôme, declaring that the Commune had been victorious, that the Versailles troops had everywhere fraternised, and that they would be in the enemy's capital that night. There were several intimations to the contrary, however. During the fighting, according to the correspondent of the *Morning Advertiser* already quoted, Flourens and Bergeret, Duval and others in command at Neuilly, sent in an *estafette*, with orders to gallop into the city, and cry as he sped along the Boulevards, "We are at Versailles! Thiers has surrendered!" As he shouted, "We are at Versailles!" a man caught hold of his bridle, and demanded, "Who?" "Why, we, the Commune, of course." "Oh, yes; I know *some* of you are at Versailles, but only as prisoners." At this the crowd laughed heartily, and jeered the men who had already retreated. It was a singular thing, in the midst of all this civil commotion, to see numerous wagons going about, removing the furniture of those tenants who chose to avail themselves of the decree for the remission of rent. According to the report of an eye-witness, it was evident, from the costly character of much of this furniture, that many rich people did not disdain to take advantage of the so-called law. These persons endeavoured to remove their goods into the country; but the Communal authorities would not allow it, and turned the baggage-carts back.

Different regiments of the National Guards exhibited, during the struggle on the 2nd, very distinct qualities with regard to soldiership. Several showed the most arrant cowardice; others fought well and steadily. Alluding to some of these men, a correspondent of the *Daily News* said:—"A battalion, No. 155, coming from I know not what quarter, and proceeding towards what must be called the scene of action, halted before my door to allow the men to fall out and rest for a few minutes. They marched very well, and piled their arms in the middle of the road in thoroughly workmanlike style. They were very well officered, and had a good band, and a prétty, sprightly *vivandière*. Few carried knapsacks, those terrible impedimenta which routine inflicts upon the French regular army, and which in most cases thoroughly exhaust a man's vital powers before he can be brought into action. They all had about them, in the form of a scarf, a good blanket, and most carried a satchel with a few necessaries. I looked for a long time through an opera-glass, and was surprised to find how cheerful officers and men seemed, although, unless the Versailles army fraternises with them, they must know that they will either be massacred or disarmed." Battalions such as this, however, seem to have been rather the exception than the rule. For the most part, the Communal Guards were but indifferent soldiers, as might reasonably be expected of men whose usual life was that of civilians, and who had had very little of the instruction or the experience necessary to make first-class troops.

The Communists determined to renew the struggle on Monday, the 3rd. During all the night of Sunday the *rappel* was being beaten, and large camps were formed in the Avenue Neuilly, the Avenue de la Grand Armée, the Champs Elysées, and other places in the same directions. Bivouac fires were lighted, the "Marseillaise" and the "Chant du Départ" were repeatedly sung, and the men every now and then uttered cries of "To Versailles!" On the morning of the 3rd it was found that an army of formidable strength had mustered to the standards, and that even some of the reactionary arrondissements had furnished contingents. Bergeret, the chief commander of this force, divided his men into three columns, and at about five o'clock A.M. they set out. The left column, commanded by General Eudes, marched upon Fontenay-aux-Roses, situated to the south-south-west of Paris; the right, headed by Bergeret

himself, was directed on Courbevoie and Versailles; while the centre, under the direction of General Duval, proceeded towards Sèvres and St. Cloud. In the rear, the forces of Flourens were held in reserve at Neuilly. The great object of the attack was Versailles, and the three chief columns were therefore to converge on that town. They had with them 200 pieces of artillery, and pushed forward with some assurance of victory. The Army of Versailles, anticipating a renewed attack, made, early in the morning, a concentric movement forward, after powerfully reinforcing its first line, which had been engaged the day before at Courbevoie. As the day advanced, a battery in position, together with some flying batteries, cannonaded the heads of the columns of National Guards as they appeared debouching from Issy by the road leading to Versailles. At the same time a strong column of insurgent troops, estimated at 20,000 strong, entered the valley formed by the heights of Puteaux, Suresnes, and Mont Valérien on one side, and Buzenval and Malmaison on the other. The first corps got forward without difficulty, but the rear-guard was taken in flank by a well-sustained fire from Mont Valérien. The National Guards seem to have set out with a rash and utterly ungrounded belief that the fort would not fire on them. In the false confidence engendered by this idea, they advanced close under the guns, and even placed batteries within a few hundred yards of the walls. The commandant of the fort suffered a large number to march by towards Nanterre and Rueil; but when he at last opened fire, the effect was terrific. The battalions were thrown into confusion, and a flight towards Paris set in. The old cry of treason was again heard; but it is needless to look for any further explanation of the catastrophe than is furnished by the incompetency of the generals and the inefficient character of the troops. The retreat in this direction began before eight o'clock in the morning; and, although the *rappel* was beaten for reinforcements, it was impossible to rally the men for another attack on Valérien. Those who had got beyond the fortress found their retreat cut off by the fire from its guns; but in other quarters some progress was made by the Communal divisions. The centre column advanced under cover of Forts Issy and Vanvres, where batteries had been planted, which kept up a heavy fire on Sèvres. Fighting occurred at various points; and towards the south the attack was facilitated by the fire of the southern forts, which were in possession of the rebels. The troops of General Duval were engaged until four in the afternoon, attempting to carry the heights of Meudon, but were then obliged to fall back. Near Clamart, Châtillon, and Meudon, the losses were considerable; in the neighbourhood of Bas Meudon a very bloody contest took place, both sides fighting with the exasperation and fury peculiar to civil war; and the streets of Val Fleury, the Forest of Meudon, the Stone Mill, and the railway station of Clamart, were bombarded by the artillery of Versailles. Strange to say, the losses were least serious in the vicinity of Valérien, and many of the National Guards themselves said that the fortress had spared them, and might have made much greater havoc in their ranks. With many loud and bitter complaints, however, they accused their chiefs of stating that Valérien was in possession of friendly troops, and would not fire on them. "We are betrayed," they said—"again and always betrayed." The most respectable achievement of the day on the part of the insurgents consisted in the advance of 20,000 men from the plateau of Châtillon towards Versailles. In the evening they arrived within three kilomètres of that place; when, finding themselves without ammunition or provisions, and in a position of great danger, they fell back towards Paris. At the close of the day, however, the Communists still remained in possession of Châtillon.

That the insurgents should have met with only so small a measure of success, and should have sustained so many reverses, is not at all surprising when we consider the composition of their army and the training of their commanders. The men were for the most part half-drilled artisans, and their leaders were as uninstructed as themselves in the methods of war. Bergeret, the chief commander, was a printer, and appears to have been quite ignorant of military affairs. Had his opponent, General Vinoy, attempted at a moment's notice to print a book, this man would probably, and, if so, very justly, have condemned his folly and presumption in undertaking to practise an art which he had not previously learned. Yet Bergeret never doubted his own fitness to conduct the difficult operations of an army in the field;—as if a knowledge of one of the most complicated and precise of sciences were a matter of instinct; or as if it came with the assumption of the soldier's uniform; or as if the mere shouting of "Long live the Republic!" sufficed to supply a man with potent genius and universal experience. It has been said that every Englishman believes himself to be a born judge of horses. It is certain that every Frenchman is profoundly convinced that he wants nothing but opportunity to be a Napoleon Buonaparte. Ultra-Republicans make the grievous mistake of supposing that because courage and

enthusiasm were alone almost enough to win battles in the old times, when individual qualities counted for much more than they do now, they will be equally successful in these days of highly-wrought systems and of organised military science. The Communists paid the penalty of this blunder; but they compensated themselves by the usual amount of vaunting. Bergeret was followed, during the operations of the 3rd, by a carriage drawn by a pair of horses. These horses being killed, it was said that Bergeret had had two shot under him. Similar exaggerations were prevalent during the latter part of the day, and they comforted the people vastly.

Paris certainly had need of comfort, for the appearance of the retreating soldiers was not re-assuring. At a little after eight in the evening, the Special Correspondent of the *Times* saw the first Communists returning to Paris in scattered bands. Several omnibuses were filled with them; some were lying on the ground, others were drinking at the few restaurants they found open. "They seemed demoralised," wrote the correspondent, "and with little or no discipline. There were a few Garibaldians and regulars among them. I saw a Zouave carrying three chassepôts. At the bridge of Neuilly I found a battalion formed in good order. Just then there was a panic; we could see in the distance, near the Napoleon Monument, a crowd of men rushing down towards the bridge. It was rumoured that artillery was descending from Mont Valérien, and going to sweep the Avenue. A battalion hurried up to the barricade, and, with rifles lowered ready to fire, made a good front. The stream of fugitives, however, still flowed on across the bridge. There was also a slight rush to the left, along the river bank, as if to see whether a flank movement were not being made from Valérien. I crossed the bridge, and joined some ambulance carriages which had just come up. We advanced to the monument, and, turning to the left, went nearly to the top of the Avenue St. Germain, under Valérien, which was firing incessantly towards Argenteuil." Pursuing his course towards the north-west, this writer found, even after ten o'clock at night, that firing was still going on. "A shell," he says, "was fired close to us from Valérien, and the carriages were obliged to fall back. We found afterwards that the shell had probably been fired because some Communists were taking advantage of the vicinity of the ambulance to carry off a cannon abandoned in the road. A little further on was another cannon, also abandoned. The firing from Valérien grew slacker, and three of us advanced to Nanterre to see if ambulances were wanted there. Beyond the second deserted cannon lay, in a trench, the body of a Communist officer. A field-battery had apparently been placed there to act against Valérien, though immediately under the point-blank fire of its heavy guns. A sharp fusillade was going on in front, seemingly near Buzenval, and we could hear now and then mitrailleuses, and shells were being unceasingly thrown by Valérien to our right at troops whom we could not see, but who must have been somewhere within range, under cover, as their bullets passed over our heads. They were probably a portion of the troops whom we heard afterwards had been surrounded at Nanterre. The demoralisation of the Communists was complete. We found two officers hiding in a house, and the men were begging the villagers to lend them clothes in order that they might not be caught in their uniform by the troops. They seemed to have no other idea of their own position, or of the military movement of their party, than that they were surrounded and betrayed. The wounded were coming in, as fighting was going on close by; but these were not numerous." The writer saw the gendarmes belonging to the Government forces bring some fugitives in; and these were treated with a severity which showed that they had met with no sympathisers. They were loaded with curses and abuse, struck with the butt-ends of rifles, and sometimes threatened with immediate death. On one occasion a general interfered to save the lives of his prisoners, saying that the proper treatment of such men was to despise them. Even the badly wounded were jeered at, and the captives generally were told that there was no need of ropes for binding them, as they would be shot on making the slightest attempt to escape.

In the course of this action the celebrated Gustave Flourens met his death. He had fixed his head-quarters at a house not far from Meudon, though the bulk of his reserve force seems to have been at Neuilly. A company of gendarmes, being informed where he was to be found, determined to take him dead or alive. They accordingly entered the house; but only one had courage to go up into the room where Flourens and his aide-de-camp were preparing to get out of the window. On hearing the door opened, Flourens turned round, and fired at the intruder. The shot missed the gendarme, and in another second the head of the Communist leader was cleft in two by a sword-stroke.* The death of this almost maniacal revolutionist gave great relief at Versailles, where it was thought that the Red Republic could hardly survive his decease. But this was an error founded on

* *Daily News* correspondent.

imperfect knowledge. There were many such fanatical spirits in Paris, and they grew more desperate as the days wore on. It is far from impossible that Flourens, had he lived, would have proved a trouble to his comrades, either by aiming at undue power, or by endeavouring to pull down what he had been instrumental in setting up. His was one of those restless natures which cannot exist with any satisfaction except in the turmoil of a volcano.

Fighting again took place on the 4th, when the Versailles troops dislodged the insurgents from the redoubt of Châtillon. Two batteries of twelve guns were ordered to extinguish the fire of this work; but the regiments in front of the redoubt—consisting of the Deroja Brigade and the Division of General Pelle—did not wait for the batteries to complete their task, but carried the position at a rush. A Versailles bulletin, signed by M. Thiers, said that of "two generals improvised by the insurgents"—Henri and Duval—the first was taken and the second killed; that the cavalry who escorted the prisoners "had the greatest trouble, in entering Versailles, to protect them from the popular irritation;" and that "never had demagogues presented more ignoble countenances." This contemptuous language greatly irritated the Communists. Later in the day, the insurgents renewed the combat from behind walls in rear of the redoubt; but they were driven back, and forced to retire into Paris. They seem, however, to have fought better than on the day before; though they were so badly handled that in one spot they were firing into each other with mitrailleuses for a quarter of an hour before they found out their mistake.

There can be little doubt that the Versailles troops behaved with great ferocity to their prisoners. Several independent observers testify to this fact; and it was said that it even caused a reaction in their favour to spring up amongst the people of the Royalist town where the Government and the army had their head-quarters; though many of the Versaillese joined in the outrages committed on the captives. When the prisoners were brought in, M. Picard, the Minister of the Interior, walked about from group to group, making jokes; and Madame Thiers, surrounded by a bevy of ladies, sat looking on in a balcony of the Prefecture. Henri (who a few days afterwards escaped, and got back again into Paris) produced a considerable effect. He was young, handsome, and manly, and conducted himself with courage and dignity. But for the most part it was a miserable sight; and the treatment of the Communist prisoners undoubtedly did much towards embittering a conflict which was already not at all wanting in heat and venom.

The organs of the Commune hardly knew what to say of the events by which they were now confronted; but they boasted, though in somewhat vague language, of great successes, and, to prevent any other and more veracious accounts being published, all the independent journals on the morning of the 5th were suppressed in a body, though some were afterwards permitted to reappear. At the same time a Department of the Press was established at the Ministry of the Interior, and it exercised its powers with an iron hand. A great many reassuring announcements were put forth. On the 3rd, the Communal authorities issued a bulletin, signed by all the military chiefs, which said:—"The Monarchical reaction is pitiless. Yesterday it attacked Neuilly; to-day, Vanvres and Châtillon. Happily warned in time, our forces assumed the offensive vigorously, and repulsed the enemy along the whole line. The enemy has been thrown back on the heights of Meudon, and a daring reconnaissance has been pushed as far as Bougival." On the 4th the citizens were addressed in a proclamation which began:—"The Monarchists who are sitting at Versailles do not wage war against you like civilised men, but like savages. The Vendéans of Charette, the agents of Piétri, shoot their prisoners, and massacre the wounded in the ambulances. Twenty times the wretches who dishonour the uniform of the Line have turned their muskets butt-end upwards, and then traitorously fired upon our gallant men." It will be seen that the very accusations which French and Germans brought against one another during the recent campaigns were now reproduced in the fury of civil strife. The troops of the Commune were lauded in this proclamation with the utmost fervour of language. The document went on to say:—"The energy, the courage, and the devotion to the Republic of the National Guards, their heroism and their constancy, are admirable. Their artillerymen have taken aim with an accuracy and precision that have been wonderful. Their fire has repeatedly silenced the fire of the enemy, who has been compelled to leave a mitrailleuse in our hands. Citizens, the Commune entertains no doubt of victory. Energetic measures have been taken. The public services, momentarily disorganised by defection and treason, are now reorganised. The time is usefully employed for your approaching triumph. The Commune counts upon you, as you may count upon it. The Royalists of Versailles will soon have nothing left but the shame of their crimes. With you, citizens, will rest the eternal honour of having saved France and the Republic. National Guards, the Commune congratulates you, and declares that you have



BEHIND THE BARRICADE.



deserved well of the Republic." This was signed by the Executive Commission—Bergeret, Delescluze, Félix Pyat, G. Fridon, and E. Vaillant. The dreadful subject of reprisals soon began to be talked about. An evening edition of the *Official Journal* of the 5th of April contained an address from the Commune to the people, asserting that the Government of Versailles had placed itself beyond the laws of war, and even of humanity, and was forcing the Commune to retaliate. "If, continuing to disown the usages of war among civilised people," the address went on, "our enemies should again massacre any of our soldiers, we shall reply by the execution of an equal or double number of prisoners." Next morning the *Official Journal* contained the following decree:—

"Considering that the Versailles Government openly treads under foot the laws of humanity and those of war, and that it has been guilty of horrors such as even the invaders of French soil have not dishonoured themselves by; that the representatives of the Commune of Paris are imperatively called upon to defend the honour and the lives of the two millions of inhabitants who have entrusted to them the care of their destinies; that it is incumbent to take all the measures at once necessitated by the situation: considering that the political men and the magistrates of the city ought to ensure the common safety, together with respect for public liberty, it is decreed:

"Art. 1.—Every person guilty of complicity with the Versailles Government will be immediately arrested and imprisoned.

"Art. 2.—A jury will be summoned within twenty-four hours to investigate the charges brought forward.

"Art. 3.—The jury will give its decision within forty-eight hours.

"Art. 4.—All accused persons detained by the verdict of the jury will be the hostages of the people of Paris.

"Art. 5.—Every execution of a prisoner of war, or of a partisan of the regular Government of the Commune of Paris, will be immediately followed by the execution of thrice the number of hostages detained in virtue of Art. 4, who will be selected by lots.

"Art. 6.—Every prisoner of war will be brought before the jury, which will decide whether he is to be immediately set at liberty, or detained as a hostage.

"THE COMMUNE OF PARIS."

The publication of this decree filled Paris with so much consternation that some guillotines were taken out and burnt. A large number of the citizens were disaffected to the Commune, and no one knew how soon he might be seized as a hostage, and shot in retaliation for the execution of some Red Republican. The law of reprisals has always been permitted in warfare, and has from time to time been put in practice; yet it is at best a very dreadful necessity, and one which casts a great moral responsibility on those who resort to such a method of self-protection. It is obviously liable to the objection that it punishes the innocent for the guilty; while, by provoking counter-reprisals, it indefinitely extends the area of hostilities, and adds an element of personal rancour and revenge to the ordinary exasperation of conflict. Circumstances may unquestionably arise which render it imperative; but as far as can be ascertained from a careful examination of all the evidence after the excitement of the occasion had passed away, no such circumstances had occurred in the present case. It is certain that, at the time this decree was issued, no Communists had been deliberately executed, with the exception of those soldiers who had deserted their colours; and it is a universal military custom to shoot, immediately and on the spot, all soldiers taken in the act of fighting against their flag. There cannot be a doubt that the Communal authorities would have acted in the same way towards any of their own troops who had proved traitors to the cause they professed to serve; and there was, therefore, in reality no shadow of excuse for the ferocious measure adopted by the Parisian insurgents. The Communists appear to have claimed for themselves a sort of divine right of killing, without conceding to their opponents any right to kill in return. Although the death of Flourens occurred in the course of actual hostilities, they described it as an assassination; and the privates who fell in action were said to have been "assassinated" by the enemies of the country.

It is but fair, however, to state that in "The History of the Commune of Paris" published by M. Vésinier, ex-Member and Secretary of the Commune, and Chief Editor of the *Official Journal*, it is said that Duval was shot after he had been taken prisoner. But the testimony of this writer is open to grave suspicion, because his prejudices are so strong that in the same breath he praises a certain act, when committed by his own party, as the noblest heroism, and denounces it, when committed by the Versaillese, as murder. His account of the death of Duval is as follows:—

"The old hired Imperial assassin [Vinoy], now in the service of a Republic—and a fine one too!—which he helped to destroy in the year 1851, galloped to the front of the prisoners. 'Is there among you,' said he, 'a gentleman who calls himself General Duval? Where is he?' 'Here I am,' said Duval, stepping from the ranks with two other chiefs of battalion, who were also called out. 'If you had taken me prisoner,' said the Imperialist general, 'would you have had me shot?' 'Without hesitation,' coolly replied *the courageous Duval*. 'March these prisoners to this field, and shoot them immediately,' said *the ferocious*

Vinoy, pointing to a place near at hand. The intrepid Duval and his two heroic companions walked resolutely, and without moving a muscle, to the place appointed for their execution. Their calmness and composure never deserted them for a single instant. They took off their coats themselves, and proudly regarded their assassins, who were deeply moved by so much firmness and courage. These three stoical heroes, after laying bare their breasts, gave the signal for execution themselves, exclaiming, in a firm voice, 'Long live the Commune! Long live the Republic!' Eighty other unfortunate prisoners were slaughtered by the troops in the service of the Royalist and clerical reaction of Versailles." *

According to this impartial historian, Vinoy was a hired assassin, "blinded by crime," while Duval's avowal that he would himself have done what Vinoy was about to do, had their relative situations been reversed, was distinguished by "sublimity of expression, idea, courage, audacity, and heroism." The evidence of such a witness is worthless.

The women of Paris, who always share largely in the excitement of revolutionary periods, were greatly agitated by the events now taking place. They collected in crowds in the streets, and averred that they were about to march towards Versailles, that they might throw themselves between the combatants. They were to take their children in their arms, and to stand in front of the National Guards, so that the soldiers of Versailles might not dare to fire on them. This resolution was greatly applauded, as anything theatrical, unreal, and absurd is sure to be in Paris. Other women armed themselves with rifles, and marched nervously up and down, half pleased with their own heroism, half alarmed at the possible consequences. The more sensible part of the population, however, advised caution. It was evident that the Commune was not strong enough to take Versailles. Better, therefore, to await attack, and to repel it from behind the city walls, where there would be a greater chance of success. Even Félix Pyat now adopted this tone, though it was in direct opposition to his advice of a few days before. Faint attempts at conciliation were again made. The former Mayors of Paris, and the deputies who together with them had resigned, met on the 4th, and tried to arrange terms of peace; but the conditions they proposed had not the slightest chance of being accepted at Versailles, for it was required that the Assembly should sit in Paris, and deliver themselves up to the protection of the insurgent National Guards. On the 6th, a train of mediation left Paris for Versailles; but nothing came of the project. Matters had gone too far for any such arrangement, and the Commune soon declared that all meetings for this purpose would be regarded as treason. The Government of M. Thiers found itself growing stronger every day. Whatever doubt may at first have been felt as to the loyalty of the troops was now entirely removed. The soldiers were asked whether they had any objection to fight against Paris. Those who evinced any dislike to the duty were told that they should be sent instead to the south; but only a very small number availed themselves of the opportunity. The regulars had been stung by the insults of the National Guards, and were only too eager to prosecute the feud to an end. M. Thiers announced in the Assembly that France had recovered her army.

The leaders of the Commune, on their part, decreed that all unmarried Parisians between the ages of seventeen and thirty-five should serve in the war battalions. It was a very difficult matter for any one answering to this description of age to get out of Paris. Domiciliary visits were made, and unwilling citizens pressed into the service. Further military movements took place on the 5th and 6th, and the forts in the respective occupation of the belligerents continued to fire on each other; but no results of any importance were achieved. Notwithstanding the unpromising aspect of affairs, the Commune continued to take very high ground, and to talk as if it were an independent and sovereign Power. Acting in this spirit, M. Paschal Grousset, on behalf of the Foreign Office, addressed, on the 5th of April, the following note to the representatives of foreign nations in Paris:—"The undersigned member of the Commune, delegated to its foreign relations, has the honour to notify to you officially the constitution of the Communal Government of Paris. He begs of you to convey the knowledge of it to your Government, and seizes this occasion to express to you the desire of the Commune to knit closely the fraternal bonds which unite the people of Paris to the people of . . ." In order to stand well with foreign countries, the Communal Council arrested a number of National Guards for invading the Belgian Legation, and denounced such a violation of "the sacred rights of hospitality due by France to foreigners," and of the "diplomatic immunities respected by all civilised people." On the 26th of April, Paschal Grousset issued an order, saying:—"The Delegate of the Commune for Foreign Affairs gives notice to all whom it may concern that the persons and goods of foreign citizens are under the guarantee of the rights of neutrals, and of the proverbial hos-

* Translation by J. V. Weber. 1872.

pitality of France. In consequence, no furniture, carriages, horses, &c., no apartment inscribed in the name of a foreign citizen enjoying the immunities attached to the sacred title of guest of the Republic, can be, or ought to be, subject to requisition." The policy of Paschal Grousset, however excellent in itself, was one among many proofs that the Commune aimed at much more than merely municipal powers. It desired to treat on equal terms with the great States of the world. It hoped to supersede the Government at Versailles, and to thrust its theories and systems on the whole of France. M. Grousset was therefore instructed to make friendly overtures to the representatives of foreign countries, in the belief that some species of recognition might follow. It is to the credit of Governments generally that no response was made to so preposterous an appeal.

The vigorous action of the Versailles Government had the effect of throwing unreservedly into the arms of the Commune those of the extreme Republican party who had previously occupied a position of compromise. M. Millière published a letter in which he stated that he had believed it his duty to remain a member of the National Assembly as long as he thought it possible to fulfil the mandate of the people of Paris. But "the abominable attempt committed by the Executive Power, and the crime which the Government of Versailles was then perpetrating against right and humanity," afforded to the representatives a most serious opportunity for making a last and supreme use of their mandate in solemnly condemning a policy which knew no other means of pacifying than civil war. M. Millière declared that he wished to be present at a sitting of the National Assembly to question the Government respecting the armed attack against Paris, and added—"Let France know that Paris is not in a state of insurrection, but in a state of legitimate defence; that the people of Paris were not making any aggressive attempt, or creating any disorder, when the Government ordered them to be attacked by ex-policemen of the Empire, organised as Prætorian troops under the command of ex-Senators. I should then have declared, in the face of the world, that the reactionary majority and its Executive Power were responsible for the calamities now befalling the country; and on leaving the Assembly I should have shaken the dust from my boots." The insurrectionary Government on the 3rd of April, issued a decree declaring that Messieurs Thiers, Jules Favre, Picard, Dufaure, Jules Simon, and Pothuan were impeached, and that their property was sequestrated until judgment should be passed on them. M. Rochefort, however (who was now looked upon as almost a reactionary), counselled his friends not to take the property of those Ministers, as the Assembly would immediately give them much more than they had lost. The supplementary elections appointed by the Commune for the 5th—elections necessitated by the resignation or ineligibility of certain members—were for the present postponed, on account of the state of war. The chiefs of the insurrection could well afford to dispense with them; for there were already too many to work harmoniously together, and feuds were constantly occurring. Assi, the President of the Central Committee, was arrested on the 3rd of April, as a traitor, but was shortly afterwards permitted to escape. Lullier also escaped from prison in the early days of April, and addressed to Rochefort a letter which was afterwards published in the *Mot d'Ordre*, and which ran :—

"My dear Rochefort,—You know the infamous machinations of which I have been the victim. Arrested without avowed motive by the Central Committee, I was thrown into a lock-up of the Prefecture of Police, and kept there in secret at a time when Paris had the greatest need of men of action understanding military business. The Prefecture of Police is transformed into a State prison, and the most rigorous precautions are taken against those incarcerated in it. Nevertheless, followed by my secretary, I was able to issue quietly from my cell, and to pass through two courts, guarded each by a dozen men. As I went out, three doors were thrown open at my demand, and the soldiers keeping them presented arms to me. At the present writing, I am surrounded by two hundred resolute men, and I carry three loaded revolvers in my pockets.

"I was for a long time so simple as to go about unarmed, and unaccompanied by friends. But I am now resolved to break the head of whoever may come to arrest me. I beg also to inform you that I never hide myself, and that I walk openly and unmolested on the Boulevards. I fraternally shake both your hands.—Your devoted friend, C. LULLIER."

The same eccentric person also wrote a letter in which he adjured the Commune to call him to its bar, in order that its members might listen to grave revelations of the past, and important military suggestions as to the future. His friend, M. Rochefort, quarrelled with the Commune almost as much as with the Empire or the Versailles Government. In an article in the *Mot d'Ordre* of the 6th of April, he said :—"It is necessary that Paris should be enlightened as to the men, partly unknown, into whose hands she has placed her destinies. We require at the Hôtel de Ville, as well as at Versailles, that the attitude of all persons should be clearly made out. The situation is un-

bearable." M. Rochefort stated that no less than 7,000 men had been placed *hors de combat* during the late fighting, and censured the conduct of the military authorities, contending that there was no immediate necessity for marching on Versailles. He asked for the name of the man who ordered that fatal three days' sortie, and demanded that he should explain his object before the nation. All the more moderate men of the revolutionary party were opposed to the action of the Commune, and several resigned from day to day.

The difficulty experienced by the Commune in raising funds was increased by the endeavours of the wealthy to convey as much money out of the city as they could. The Assistance Publique, which had its head-quarters opposite the Hôtel de Ville, and which managed estates and collected moneys for the hospitals of Paris, smuggled out of the town, on the 1st of April, no less than seventy-five million francs. The money and securities were hidden in potato-sacks, and removed through the gates in potato-carts. A few days later, the Jesuits made an attempt to get off with 400,000 francs; but they were not successful, for the money was seized at the Lyons Railway Station in strong boxes. The Communal authorities could not afford to lose such a prize, if there was any possibility of securing it. Want of funds is the curse of all revolutionary Governments; and it was peculiarly so with the Commune. The prolonged convulsions of society —the succession of civil war to foreign war—the abstraction of labour from its ordinary pursuits, that the men might do the work of soldiers, and the terrible uncertainty in which everything was involved — had led to an almost complete stoppage of trade; so that without positive confiscation the Commune could hardly have lasted a week.

All this while, Marseilles (which had made a few insurrectionary attempts during the war) was giving a good deal of trouble in the south. A Communal movement began towards the close of March; a local Government, of a highly revolutionary character, was established; the red flag was exhibited, and some of the leading authorities were arrested. The Departmental Provisional Committee then issued a proclamation, in which they said:—"We want the establishment of the Republic by Republican institutions. We want unity of political guidance, with a Constituent Assembly, and a Republican Government the offspring of that Assembly, both having their seat in Paris. We want decentralisation of the authorities, with autonomy of the Commune, while confiding to the Municipal Council elected by each large city its administrative and municipal belongings. The institution of Prefectures is fatal to liberty. We want the establishment of the Republic by the federation of the National Guard over the whole breadth of our country. But, above all things, we want what Marseilles wants. If the Government having its seat at Versailles had consented to dissolve the National Assembly, whose mission had expired, and if the Government had transferred its seat to Paris, we should not have demanded such important guarantees, and we should have awaited the accomplishment of our wishes with less impatience. But, as the conflict exists, we must establish and maintain our legitimate claims. In virtue of these principles, the Prefectorial Administration at Marseilles must be suppressed, the Municipal Council must be dissolved. A new Municipal Council invested with departmental administration and the task of guarding common interests must be elected. The Mayor of Marseilles will perform the duties of Prefect. The Councils-General and the Councils of the Arrondissements will be suppressed. The Chief of the Staff of the National Guards, similarly elected, must centralise the military forces, whatever they are." The success of these agitators did not last many days. The "rebellious Government," as they described the Administration at Versailles, sent its troops against the malcontents on the 4th of April, and attacked them at the railway station. They were utterly defeated and put to flight by two companies of infantry. Three of the insurgents who were captured were instantly shot. The Prefecture, which was still held by the revolutionists, was then bombarded from the hill of Notre Dame de la Garde and Fort Nicolas; and towards evening the Prefecture was taken by the Government soldiers. Nearly all the National Guards, Garibaldians, and disbanded soldiers, were arrested, and on the following morning General Espivent entered Marseilles with 6,000 troops, and was well received. He issued a proclamation suspending the clubs and public meetings; ordering arms, ammunition, &c., to be surrendered within forty-eight hours; dissolving the National Guards; and threatening the revolutionary newspapers with provisional suspension. It was also declared that no political announcement could be posted on the walls without authority, or be inserted in the newspapers. The Prefecture and the houses in the vicinity suffered terribly from the bombardment, and 200 persons were killed and wounded. But Marseilles was quiet, and the Government of M. Thiers had won a move upon the chess-board.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Arrests of Parisian Ecclesiastics—Blasphemous Prints—Tyrannical Conduct towards the Clergy—Insolence of the Communal Guards—Paris cowed—Arrest of Bergeret—Address of the Commune to the Departments—Further Fighting on April 7th—Desperate Struggle for the Bridge of Neuilly—Heavy Losses of the Versailles Army—Appointment of Marshal MacMahon to the Chief Command—Funeral Ceremonies at Versailles and Paris—Increasing Discontent with the Commune—The *Siècle* on the Existing Situation—Fighting on the 8th, 9th, and 10th—Collision with the Prussians—Want of Unity in the Policy of the Commune—Fugitives escaping through the Sewers—Suppression of the Grade of "General" by the Communists—Aristotle on False Democracy—The Demagogic Republic with a Footman in Attendance—Continued Fighting between the Insurgents and the Versailles Troops—Military Report of Cluseret to the Commune—Desperate Conflict—Fighting at the Southern Forts—Official Explanations of the Government in Justification of its Policy—Speech of M. Jules Favre—The Commune and the German Military Authorities—Indirect Attempts at Mediation.

DETERMINED to wage war to the utmost with the Church, the Commune now proceeded to arrest several of the clergy. The Archbishop of Paris, the curé of St. Augustin, the curé of St. Roch, and the curé of the Madeleine, were seized on the 5th, on charges of being disaffected towards the Commune, which there can be no doubt they were. Several other arrests of the same kind followed a few days later, and in some cases the alleged offence was the attempt of the ecclesiastics to smuggle money out of Paris, as related in the last chapter. The church of St. Laurent was pillaged on the 7th by the National Guards; Notre Dame was sacked (though this would appear to have been done by a party of marauders not really acting with the authority of the Commune); many churches were closed on Easter Sunday; and the dominant party lost no opportunity of showing that the clerical body must not expect mercy at their hands. The Paris correspondent of the *Guardian* said that at this time the *Père Duchesne* was cried through the streets, full of impious language and still more impious engravings. The populace seemed to be particularly fond of engravings of this character; and the writer alluded to said that they were simply and wantonly blasphemous, and seemed to have been executed with a deliberate design to insult the religious faith of others. He had seen caricatures in Italy, in which the Pope, the cardinals, and the bishops were satirised with a good deal of low and often coarse buffoonery; but there the attack stopped: it was confined to individuals, and did not extend to doctrines and sentiments. "Broad, too, as the fun often was," continued the correspondent, "there always was 'fun' at the bottom, and something which made you more or less inclined to laugh. Not so the French, whose politico-religious sallies of the same kind simply make you shudder. There is not a particle of humour about them, but the indulgence of a brutal delight only in insulting what is most sacred. The kiosks on the Boulevards are filled with drawings, openly displayed, which would, I think, be considered a disgrace to the lowest purlieus of any other metropolis in the world. Two of these are political caricatures of the Last Supper and the Kiss of Judas, and are too disgusting and worthless to be further mentioned. Almost anywhere else in the world they would be torn down and trampled upon by the first man of common decency whose eye they met. Here they enjoy impunity at least, if not popularity." The old gaiety of the Parisians seemed to have been quenched in the horrors of repeated revolutions. They were now a saturnine and ferocious race. Rabelais could expose absurdities with a genial humour that had no touch of savageness. Gross it might be, but it was not brutal. The Revolutionist could only leer with a sardonic laugh, and do his utmost to plunge everybody into the same bitterness and despair with which his own heart was filled.

This dreary, dull, and utterly purposeless mocking at even the most elemental and unsectarian objects of belief was strikingly shown in a circumstance related by the *Gaulois*, which, together with some other Paris journals, was now published at Versailles. In spite of a decree issued by the Commune, prohibiting priests from attending prisoners, one of the authorities, on a certain day, yielded to the importunities of a dying captive, and gave a priest a pass thus worded:—"These presents are to authorise the governor to allow the visit to prisoner A. of the Citizen B., who says he is the servant of somebody called God." Outrages on priests and religious establishments were frequent. The schools of the Jesuits in the Rue Lhomond were invaded by armed bands, who arrested eight of the fathers and all their servants, carted away the furniture, broke into the wine-cellar, drank a good deal of the wine on the spot, and removed the remainder. They also destroyed the mathematical instruments, maps, &c., and threw the books into the streets. Similar acts were committed at the Dominican establishment of the St. Esprit; and a Carmelite convent only saved a portion of its property by sending it to the British



FISHING FOR WEAPONS IN THE SEINE.

Embassy. Private houses also were despoiled. In the course of a few days three hundred of the clergy, it was estimated, had been arrested. The house of the curé of the Madeleine, the Abbé Deguerry—an old man of seventy-four, very highly respected—was pillaged at the time of his arrest. He himself did not long survive the indignity which he had been made to suffer; for in a few days he died at the Prefecture, of congestion of the brain; at the same time, the curé of La Trinité was seriously ill at the Conciergerie. Others were threatened with death as a means of influencing the National Government; and with this view a message was sent to Versailles, stating that, unless a million francs (£40,000) were paid as a ransom for the Archbishop of Paris, he would be killed.

The insolence of the Communal Guards exceeded all bounds. A correspondent of the *Daily News* relates that, while sitting one night at a café on the Boulevard Montmartre, he saw a captain of these citizen soldiers strike a lady in the face with great violence. He then sat down with the utmost coolness, and, although a number of people collected about him, and called him a coward, not one dared to touch him. They hissed, hooted, and pointed at him for a quarter of an hour; but he remained very quietly, knowing that his office was an effectual protection against any active proceedings. Paris, said the correspondent, was thoroughly cowed, and especially so after the decree with regard to hostages. Any one suspected of disaffection was liable to arrest, and, being once arrested, might be shot at a moment's notice for some act of the Versailles Government, over which he had no possible control. The consequence was that no one ventured to say a word against the despotism of the hour. The same correspondent was warned, when publicly reading a surreptitious copy of the *Liberté* after it had been suppressed, that he might be apprehended in consequence. It would indeed have been difficult to say who was safe from arrest. A Commission of Public Safety had been formed, and this was so powerful, that it could even, at its own pleasure, arrest members of the Communal Council, though they had a right to be heard in their defence. Lullier and Assi, two of the original leaders of the revolutionary movement, had already been thrown into prison, from which, however, they had managed or been permitted to escape. It was now the turn of Bergeret, printer and general. This hero gave orders in opposition to those from the War Office. Cluseret, the War Minister, accordingly requested him to call, that the matter might be discussed. A stormy scene ensued, and Bergeret declared that he would not obey a man who had fought in America on behalf of slavery, and who had renounced his French citizenship by becoming the naturalised citizen of another country. Cluseret, it was asserted, had, while in America some years before, fought on the side of the Confederate States during the civil war; but this was afterwards denied. An order for the arrest of Citizen Bergeret was immediately made out; and he was succeeded in the chief command by a Pole, of revolutionary antecedents, named Dombrowski. The fact of this man being a foreigner caused a great deal of annoyance among the insurgent troops, and the Communal Council found it necessary to issue the following proclamation on the subject:—

"Citizens,—We learn that there exists a certain feeling of uneasiness among the National Guard with regard to the Citizen Dombrowski, appointed commander of the city. He is reproached with being a foreigner, and unknown to the population of Paris. It is true the Citizen Dombrowski is a Pole. He was elected principal leader of the last Polish insurrection, and he successfully opposed the Russian army during several months. He has been a general under the orders of General Garibaldi, who has a special esteem for him. From the moment that Garibaldi became the commander of the army of the Vosges, his first care was to ask the co-operation of the Citizen Dombrowski. General Trochu refused to allow him to leave Paris, and even had him incarcerated. The Citizen Dombrowski was also in the war of the Caucasus, where he fought, as here, for the independence of a nation threatened by an implacable foe. The Citizen Dombrowski is therefore incontestably a warrior, and a soldier devoted to the Universal Republic. (Signed)

"THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNE."

An ex-aide-de-camp of Prince Poniatowski, however, threw considerable doubt on this account, and alleged that Dombrowski had fought in the Russian army against the rebels of the Caucasus, instead of giving them his assistance; and was otherwise a person of very questionable antecedents.

The Commune published on the 7th of April an address to the departments, defending itself from the charge of desiring to over-ride the provinces. "Paris," said this document, "only desires to establish the Republic and to conquer its Communal liberties; happy to furnish an example to the other Communes of France. If the Commune of Paris has gone beyond the limits of its normal attributes, it has done so to its great regret, and in order to respond to the state of war brought on by the Government of Versailles. Paris merely desires to confine itself within its own authority, full of

respect for the equal rights of the other Communes of France. As to the members of the Commune, they have no other desire than to see the day arrive in which Paris, freed from the Royalists who threaten her, will be able to proceed to fresh elections." The provinces were not likely to be convinced by these protestations. The Commune had from the first assumed sovereign powers, and, if its efforts had been successful, it would certainly not have abated its pretensions. In this very address, the revolutionary leaders said that their object was to "establish the Republic;" but that was a question for the whole country to decide, and not for a single city to force upon the rest of the land. Either the Republic was already established, or it was not. If it was, the ostensible work of the Commune was a superfluity. If it was not, this could only be because the nation had not cared to make any move in that direction. In the former case, the demagogues of Paris were fomenting a civil war to do what was already done. In the latter, they were substituting their sectional will for the will of those whose claim to be considered national representatives was certainly much greater than their own. The Assembly was no doubt exceeding its powers by continuing in session after the conclusion of peace; but that did not give any right to a Parisian mob to attempt a violent dissolution by force of arms, with a view to the realisation of its own fantastic schemes.

Serious fighting was still going on between the insurgents and the Government troops in the vicinity of the bridge of Neuilly; and it was evident that the former fought better every day, and were acquiring nerve with practice. Violent cannonading continued during the night of the 6th, and on the 7th (Good Friday) a desperate struggle took place for the possession of the bridge. The *Times* correspondent at Versailles said that at none of the encounters between the Prussians and the French around Paris did he see more severe fighting than on the evening of the 7th of April close to Courbevoie. Two barricades had been erected by the Communal Guards in this neighbourhood, one of which was in the middle of the bridge leading from Courbevoie to Neuilly; and it was resolved by the Versailles troops to carry these barricades, with the design of opening a way into Paris. The division of General Montaudon was accordingly marched to Courbevoie, and that officer directed the movements. Generals Péchot and Besson were also on the ground, but were both killed in the course of the day. At three o'clock in the afternoon the artillery opened fire, and Mont Valérien threw 14 and 28-pound shells from 7 and 14-pound guns against Porte Maillot, and into the insurgents' batteries on the ramparts close to that gate. The bridge was also bombarded, and the avenue leading down to the *enceinte* was enfiladed by cannon and mitrailleuses. The insurgents replied with heavy guns from Porte Maillot and the ramparts; they had also a mitrailleuse battery on the banks of the river, close to the island. After a while, the troops of General Montaudon got possession of the houses at the angles of Puteaux and Courbevoie, and opened a terrible chassepôt fire on the Paris army. Insurgents were now seen collecting in the Bois de Boulogne; but, on being shelled by Mont Valérien, they got under cover. The wood was then entered by the National soldiers, and the rebels ran across towards Porte Maillot. The Communal Guards stationed at the gate fired on the pursuers, and stopped them; but the shots from the fort brought down friends and foes alike. "When," wrote the *Times* correspondent, describing what he had witnessed, "the terrific din had somewhat abated, and the smoke partially cleared away, I saw a body of troops, each furnished with a sand-bag, approach the barricade at the end of the bridge. The insurgents had retreated to the second barricade. Putting the sand-bags on the top of the barricade, the infantry crouched behind it, and fired volley after volley along the bridge, while Valérien and all the military batteries kept sweeping the avenue. In half an hour the troops were on the bridge. A column of them was marched over it, and proceeded to occupy the houses at St. James on the right, and at Neuilly on the left. A caisson left by the insurgents on the bridge exploded, and killed General Besson on the spot. The firing of artillery was still very hot; but now, at four o'clock, the fusillade had ceased near the bridge. The moment a portion of the troops had passed the bridge, some gentlemen from Versailles rushed down by a side-path to the Courbevoie side of the river; two of them, M. Funck and M. Bourdilliat, arranged a hospital in an empty house, and the Comte de Ramanet, Mr. Furley, and others went on the bridge, and carried off the wounded. The curé of the parish was also most active in this work of charity." General Péchot was badly wounded in the course of the struggle, and died in the Press Ambulance shortly after being carried in there. Another account says that General Besson was shot while endeavouring to kill one of the rebels. At about six o'clock in the evening, the fight came to an end, but the success of the Government troops, such as it was, had been purchased dearly. Twenty-one officers were killed on their side, and the

bridge was strewn with dead and wounded of both armies. The barricade on the bridge yielded little protection to the Communists, having been badly constructed of wood and paving-stones, and not being of sufficient thickness and solidity to resist the effects of artillery. In a short space of time it was utterly destroyed by the shells, which sent the stones flying in all directions.

M. Picard, on the same evening, announced the success of the army to the members of the National Assembly. He said:—"The Government has this instant received a despatch which we hasten to impart to you. The military operations at the bridge of Neuilly this morning have fully succeeded. The barricade was taken. Our losses were considerable. General Montaudon, whose despatch I am reading, says he is master of the position, and that he is at this moment executing works at the head of the bridge. The corps of Engineers and the Line behaved in the most brilliant manner. The general says: 'I am slightly wounded in the arm. General Péchot is also wounded, and so is his aide-de-camp. I remain in my positions.' This is a success, gentlemen; but in civil war such successes are doubly painful. Nevertheless, our cause is so great that the Assembly will gladly acknowledge the courage of our army. It will accept the news of this success, not as a triumph, but at the same time with profound gratitude to those who have laid down their lives for the country." M. Picard's statement that the losses had been considerable created a strong feeling of grief; and after the Minister had left the hall, he was followed into the passages by several deputies, who eagerly solicited further information than he had yet given concerning the incidents of the struggle.

A Versailles decree, published on the 8th, announced that Marshal MacMahon had been appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Assembly, and that Generals l'Admirault, Cissy, and Dubarail, would command under him, while General Vinoy would have charge of a reserved corps. The Marshal for some time declined to accept the painful position offered him; but he was at length prevailed upon to accede. It was in truth a hard fate that this brave, able, and high-spirited warrior, whose last appearance in the field was associated with a crushing and by him unmerited defeat, should be compelled to return to active service as the commander of an army engaged in civil war. His appointment, moreover, strengthened the Communist notion that the Versailles Government was intent on a restoration of the Empire. Nothing could be more absurd than such an idea; yet the reappearance of MacMahon at the head of the army that was to besiege Paris gave a certain colour to the belief. The Government, however, could not have made a better choice. MacMahon was to be depended on for doing whatever was best for the destruction of the rebellion.

The obsequies of Generals Besson and Péchot were performed at the Cathedral of Versailles on the morning of the 10th. There was of course a good deal of military display, and over the black palls of the coffins the flag of France was spread. The bodies were carried into the cathedral at nine o'clock A.M., and were followed by a number of generals in uniform, among whom was General Trochu. Messieurs Thiers and Jules Favre were also present. The Mass for the Dead was chanted with instrumental accompaniment; and at the elevation of the Host, the soldiers along the nave presented arms, and dropped on one knee. A few days earlier—viz., on the 6th—the Communists celebrated in a different fashion the obsequies of a number of their comrades slain in the military operations at ano about Neuilly. Three enormous catafalques, painted red, decked with red flags, and drawn by four horses each, proceeded down the whole length of the Boulevards from the Madeleine to the Cemetery of Montmartre, followed by a dense crowd of National Guards. No religious ceremony of any kind was observed; for the Commune, like the International, had "declared itself atheist."

A decree issued by the Commune on the 7th contained three clauses which seemed to indicate the growth of disaffection among the citizen soldiers. It was to the effect that any refractory National Guard would be disarmed; that every one so disarmed for refusing to do his duty would be deprived of his pay; and that, in case of refusal to go out to fight, the refractory soldier would be deprived of his civic rights, in accordance with the decisions of the Councils of Discipline. In every direction there was gathering discontent with the proceedings of the masked and secret despotism which was leading the city to destruction. M. Ranc, a member of the Communal Council, resigned on the 7th, and at the same time addressed a letter to his colleagues, in which he said:—"Disapproving upon several important points the direction which has been given to the Communal movement, and not wishing on the other hand to create dissension at a moment when the Republic stands most in need of unity of action, I decide upon retiring. I return to the ranks, and become once more a simple soldier of Paris, of the Commune, and of the Republic." On the 8th, the *Siècle* published an article condemning the prohibition lately issued by the Commune

against the projected meeting at the Bourse in favour of conciliation. The article pointed out the impossibility of the Commune maintaining itself by force against the army of Versailles. It showed that Paris possessed no thorough means of defence, and that there was no chance of the siege being raised. The *Siècle* presumed that, from motives of humanity, the Versailles Government would not prevent the introduction of provisions into Paris, and that the attack would be made only from the side not occupied by the Prussians. The writer then proceeded to analyse the means at the disposal of the Commune, and said:—"The Commune has no heavy artillery capable of defending the forts and bastions. The forts on the south are only armed with field-pieces; for the defence of the *enceinte* there are not more than two hundred guns of small calibre. On the other hand, the Versailles army is receiving, by railway, siege-guns from various arsenals, whose fire would in a few days render the forts and bastions in the hands of the Commune absolutely untenable. Defensive tactics, pure and simple, are mere Utopia. There remain, then, but the hypotheses of the arrival of an army of succour, or of a battle won by the army of the Commune resuming the offensive." As for the first hypothesis, the *Siècle* pointed to the complete failure of the Communal movement in the provinces, while, as regarded the second, it said that such means were condemned by the experiences of the 3rd and 4th of April. The writer concluded with an urgent appeal to the Commune not to reject the idea of conciliation. These and similar counsels, however, were as words addressed to the wind. The leaders of the Commune were in the position of Macbeth after the perpetration of repeated murders. They were so steeped in blood that to return would have been far more difficult than to go on.

The success of the Versailles troops on the 7th was followed up on the 8th. Mont Valérien and the batteries planted on the bridge of Neuilly incessantly bombarded Porte Maillot, and even swept the Avenue de la Grande Armée. The quarter lying between the Arch of Triumph and Porte Maillot was completely exposed to this terrible fire, and several persons were killed and wounded. The Turkish Embassy was struck by three shells, which passed through the entire building; and many other houses were also damaged. Shells dropped in the Champs Elysées, and it was found necessary to station a number of Communal Guards there to prevent people from advancing. The insurgent authorities despatched large reinforcements to Porte Maillot, and three mitrailleuses were sent to resist the progress of the enemy. Fighting also took place at Villejuif, and at several points from Bagneux to Billancourt. All the southern forts took part in the contest, and their fire was returned by the Versailles batteries. The bombardment went on during the night, and was prosecuted with unrelaxing vigour on the following day—Sunday, April 9th. The Versailles troops were thus enabled to cross the Seine, and occupy Sablonville and the racecourse at Longchamps. The firing from that side broke the floor of the drawbridge at Porte Maillot; and it was curious (as a writer from the spot remarked) to see people quietly fishing on the banks of the Seine while the cannon-balls were flying over their heads. Within range of these deadly missiles, the Communal Guards fared badly, unless where they could manage to hide in cross-streets, and get under the shelter of houses. On the Sunday evening, the insurgents made an attack on Asnières, to the north-east of Paris, and achieved a slight success. The general position of affairs, however, continued to be favourable to the Government troops, and, on the morning of the 10th, shells were still falling near the Arch of Triumph. Late on the afternoon of that day, the firing was extremely severe, and none but those on duty as soldiers, or in connection with the ambulances, were allowed to pass beyond the Round Point of the Champs Elysées. One of the shells hit the Arch, but without doing it much injury. The Communists spoke in high terms of the capacity of their new general, Dombrowski; but the situation was not encouraging, and extra barricades were built in the interior of Paris, to guard against possible eventualities. Nevertheless, the insurgents pushed forward in some directions, and succeeded in making their way through the Bois de Boulogne as far as the village itself, which they occupied. The Mayor had escaped, but the invading troops seized the municipal councillors, and sent them prisoners to Paris. Large numbers of skirmishers of the Communal army were scattered about the wood, and they took possession of the château of Baron Rothschild, near Longchamps—an important position, as the persons holding it were able to fire from the windows on the Versailles soldiers stationed along the right bank of the river from Suresnes to St. Cloud. On the evening of the same day (the 10th), an awkward incident occurred in a different direction. A sergeant of the Communal Guards went out armed towards St. Denis, and wounded a Prussian. A conflict ensued; members of the Commune arrived with a flag of truce, and the Prussians declared that they would not recognise the Red Republic. At the same time, General



THE EXPLOSION IN THE AVENUE RAPP.

Fabrice moved from Rouen to St. Denis, where a battery of 12-pounders, pointing towards Paris, was established.

The Communal Council continued rapidly to dwindle in numbers, while it increased in violence and desperation. Nobody knew who was really directing the fortunes of the city; for men came and went like phantoms, or were whirled about like straws in a gusty wind. The *Mot d'Ordre* and the *Rappel* expressed great dissatisfaction with the indefinite postponement of the elections for filling the vacant places in the Communal Council; and



DESERTING A BARRICADE.

M. Rochefort declared that twenty-five resignations, two deaths, and several imprisonments made so serious a hole in a body of eighty citizens, that there was urgent need of stopping it. Division, antagonism, and hesitation were visible in the conduct of affairs; and whatever unity of design may at first have appeared in the revolutionary movement, was being rapidly broken up by the attrition of warring particles. "The only unity among these revolutionists," said a correspondent of the *Daily News*, "is the unity of certain general ideas, which urge them on madly. When an idea, however, is to be reduced to practice, it is necessary to decide upon details, about which there may be endless scope for difference; and it has been quite evident, from the moment the Commune, or, rather, its forerunner, the Central Committee, came into power, that there was no directing mind amongst them, and that there was the utmost diversity of opinion as to every species of detail. One day we were loudly informed that the object of the Revolution was purely municipal; next day, that it was national. One day the *Official Journal* announces itself as the journal of the Commune; next day, as of the French Republic. One day the suppression of a number of newspapers astonishes Paris; next day, members of the Executive Commission say that they knew nothing of it, and condemn such acts as unwise. One day the Executive Commission publishes a decree forbidding public meetings; next day, and the day after, the official organ of the Commune refuses to give the decree publicity. All this contrariety of action is the evident result of gusts of opinion in an undisciplined and disorganised, but excitable, body of men." Yet there were no signs of yielding. On the contrary, placards counselling conciliation were torn down, and an appeal was made to the women of Paris, calling on them to pass resolutions for the formation of committees charged with organising a movement among the wives, daughters, and sisters of the male combatants. It is said that some few women did really take part in the struggles about Neuilly and Courbevoie; but they appear to have been only rare exceptions. The Commune was evidently at a loss how to fill up its ranks to the

required extent. General Cluseret, in reorganising the so-called National Guards, enlisted men from nineteen to forty years of age, thus exceeding the limits fixed by the decree of a few days before. A handbill also was circulated, calling for artillerymen, and offering them three francs a day, besides their food. Obviously, the citizens were not very eager in coming forward to defend the threatened Commune.

The desire of the more respectable part of the Parisian population to escape from the city was naturally very great; but, after the first few days of Communal rule, this became almost an impossibility. So many people got away in those days, that the new authorities began to fear they should be left with very straitened resources if the flight were not stopped; and the gates were accordingly guarded with great strictness. Some adventurous persons, however, escaped by lowering themselves with ropes from the ramparts, and others made their way out through the sewers. Most of these fugitives gathered about the Government at Versailles, and the small town became inconveniently crowded. The Ministry of M. Thiers took heart at the sight of so many supporters, and spoke every day more confidently of success; while M. Jules Favre became quite cheerful over the situation, and talked as if the battle were already won.

One of the military reforms of Citizen Cluseret was the suppression of the grade of "General." Such a position, it was said, was incompatible with the democratic character of the National Guards. How it could be more incompatible with that character than any other official grade does not appear; but the Commune, had it been able to establish itself, would possibly have abolished all commands whatever, and left every man to fight according to his own devices, or, if he pleased, not to fight at all, for who has the right to tell a citizen to do anything he would rather not do? This caricature of democracy—of which the right name is not democracy at all, but demagogueism—is not an invention of the modern world, though the French, ever since their first Revolution, have brought it forward with great pertinacity, to the repeated destruction of all liberal progress in their country. Aristotle, in his treatise on Politics (Book V., chap. 9), alludes to the same stupid error on the part of some of the Grecian States. In those States, he remarks, "a method is pursued which is contrary to their welfare; the reason of which is that they define freedom wrongly. Their freedom and equality consist in every one doing as he pleases; so that in such a democracy every one may live as he likes—'as leads his bent,' to use the words of Euripides. But this," adds Aristotle, "is wrong: for no one ought to think it slavery to live in conformity with government; he should rather regard it as protection." Everything, of course, depends upon the nature of the government which requires our obedience. There are governments so tyrannical, immoral, and opposed to the interests and aspirations of the community, that to rebel against them may be as much a duty as a right. But to quarrel with the very principle of government (which is the practice of demagogues)—to deny authority simply as such—to be jealous of every form of deputed power, and to say that freedom consists only in a man "doing as he pleases"—is to strike at the root of all social order, of all civilisation, and of all corporate existence.

Another step taken by Cluseret was characterised by much greater sense. He issued an address to the National Guards, rebuking them for their love of gold-lace, braiding, and other kinds of finery. It appears that these citizen soldiers, when promoted to high appointments, bedizened themselves in dazzling uniforms. They went to a celebrated army contractor, and ordered the dresses, for which they never paid, or proposed to pay, anything. The Republican virtue which could not endure so aristocratic a title as general, yielded incontinently to the seduction of fine clothes, good living, and a certain state and dignity. It was alleged by a writer in the *Daily News* that the members of the Communal Council, sitting at the Hôtel de Ville, had servants to wait on them in all the old liveries, even with the accustomed accessories of artificial calves. It does not appear that Citizen Cluseret, or any other citizen, had a word to say against this absurdity: probably, all liked it too much. The Demagogic Republic, attended by a footman in livery, makes a strange picture for the admiration of the world.

The night between the 10th and 11th of April passed quietly at the scene of contention, the belligerents seeming, by a sort of tacit agreement, to suspend hostilities for a while. The Communists took advantage of this informal truce to repair the injury done to the Maillot gate and the adjoining bastion; and both sides were busy for some hours in burying their dead and preparing for further efforts. During the morning of the 11th, Dombrowski reported that he was firmly installed in Asnières, that he held the north-east corner of Neuilly, and that he was also strongly posted at Villiers and Levallois. On the Versailles side, the report was that General l'Admirault occupied Rueil, Nanterre, and Bois Colombes, that he was watching Asnières, and that his head-quarters were at

Garches, not far from St. Cloud. The accounts of the two combatants were very contradictory; but it is clear that the Versailles troops had not as yet made any substantial advance, that some of the ground they had gained was afterwards relinquished, and that in certain directions the Communal forces were more favourably situated than they had been a few days before. The pause in the prosecution of active operations continued during a portion of the 11th; but in the course of the day the Communal Guards sought to draw the enemy into a trap by a feigned retreat from Asnières. Although the Versailles troops were not deceived by this bait, the movement led to a recommencement of the fighting. Very little, however, was done until night, when an onslaught was made by the Government forces on the west and south of Paris simultaneously. The army had just received thirty new guns of large calibre, and these were employed in the night attack. A vigorous assault was delivered against Fort Vanvres; but this appears to have been designed to mask a more serious movement on Porte Maillot, and at one time the alarm among the Communists was so great that it was believed the Versailles troops were within the walls, and marching down the Champs Elysées. The attack, in reality, led to no important results, though the cannonade continued with more or less violence throughout the night.

The events of the 12th were of a similar character. Porte Maillot was again very heavily bombarded. The gate was completely broken in; the adjacent houses were crumbling into ruins, and the railway station was reduced to a heap of rubbish. According to Communal reports, the Parisian Guards recovered three-fourths of Neuilly during the 12th, and surrounded a strong body of Versailles troops on the Ile de Grande Jatte, in the Seine; but these accounts appear to have been exaggerated, and the Versailles troops, if surrounded at all, afterwards managed to escape. On the other hand, several of the Communists were taken prisoners, and the position at the close of the day was not decisively better for either party. The insurgents, however, had now succeeded in establishing a battery of six great guns on the Trocadero, and from this battery a shell was one day sent as far as Mont Valérien; but for the most part the firing was bad, and did more damage to friends than foes. On the 13th, Neuilly was again the scene of fighting, and Mont Valérien sent shells into the Champs Elysées at the corner of the Rue de Morny. The southern forts—Vanvres, Issy, and Montrouge—fired continuously on the advanced positions of the Versailles troops, and some skirmishes took place in the neighbourhood of Asnières. Writing on that day, Cluseret reported to the Commune:—

"I have just returned from inspecting the southern forts, and the line of defence generally from Montrouge to La Muette. The impression made upon my mind is very favourable. The attacks yesterday and the day before were made with a great number of men on the side of the enemy, but were nevertheless repulsed so easily, and with such small losses, that they cannot but inspire us with a thorough confidence in the future. The battery of 24-pounders at the Trocadero sends shells completely into the buildings on Mont Valérien. This is all we wished to ascertain for the moment. I call the attention of the Commune to the good conduct of the troops, and the exceptional state of order which prevails. Both men and things are in good condition, and this fact denotes energy, activity, and competence on the part of the commander. Forts Vanvres and Montrouge are in a good state of defence. On the side of the enemy, the artillery arrangements are the same as in the time of the Prussians, but their infantry is not numerous, and does not possess much consistency. When the right time arrives, I have every reason to believe that the resistance of the Versailles forces will not be beyond our efforts."

A despatch from Versailles, dated the 14th, said, with reference to the events of the previous day, that the Government troops succeeded in the evening in taking an important position from the insurgents, and that during the week the military had occupied the Avenue Neuilly from the bridge up to the church on the left hand side, approaching from Courbevoie. A large square house, one side of which commanded the Avenue down to the bridge, was made the object of a desperate conflict on the same day (the 13th). It was filled with insurgents, who kept up a constant rifle-fire on the attacking forces at the bridge. The troops accordingly advanced towards the house, surrounded it, and eventually entered. There was a fight (says this account, which, however, has been described as overcoloured) in every apartment, from the cellars to the lofts. The Communists resisted desperately; but ultimately the Versaillese obtained possession, when 200 of the insurgents were found dead, and seventeen were made prisoners. The loss on the other side was also considerable. The floors of many of the houses at Neuilly were said to be soaked with blood; and certainly this unhappy suburb has had cause for many years to recollect the terrible civil commotions of 1871.

In the middle of the night between the 13th and 14th, some engineers and troops of the Line proceeded from the barracks of Courbevoie to Château Becon, near Asnières, where they seized a

barricade, which the engineers were proceeding to blow up when a terrific fire was opened on them from the château. An officer was wounded, and the infantry, being young soldiers, were seized with a panic, and retired hastily, with some losses. The château, however, was taken on the 17th, when 200 insurgents were made prisoners. The position was important, as commanding the Seine between Courbevoie and Asnières. During the 14th, Neuilly was taken and retaken several times, and a good deal of fighting went on between that village and Asnières, but without effecting any material modification in the positions of the two belligerents. Incessant firing continued throughout the 15th, and the authorities at Versailles announced that from noon on the following day Paris would be completely invested. The bridge of Neuilly still remained in possession of the regular troops, and some Communal Guards, in attempting to outflank their adversaries, by advancing from the Bois de Colombes along the Seine in the direction of Hauterive, so as to take the troops at Courbevoie in the rear, were met near Colombes by the Government forces, and compelled to retreat, with the loss of some prisoners. Very severe fighting took place at Fort Vanvres, which was attacked several times, but not successfully; and Citizen Eudes, who commanded the southern forts, reported on the morning of Sunday, the 16th:—"All seems finished. The night has been terrible. The battle has not ceased since six o'clock in the evening; the fort of Vanvres has borne the most violent attack. The losses of the Royalists have been enormous. They are repulsed along the whole line. It is a victory to inscribe upon the flag of the Commune. Our Federals are heroes; they have fought like lions. Place them all upon the order of the day; but we owe special mention to Citizen Leroux, the Governor of the fortress of Vanvres." On the same day, during the morning, Citizen Cluseret posted all over Paris the following order:—"The attack was extremely vigorous last night [the night of the 15th], and was principally directed against Fort Vanvres, which had to sustain five consecutive attacks. This morning, ambulance-carriages were seen carrying off the dead and wounded assailants. The 86th Battalion merits mention in the order of the day for its admirable conduct, and the Commandant has been equally commended to my notice by the Citizen Eudes for his gallantry in the defence of that fort. At Neuilly the combat continues foot by foot, it being necessary to besiege each house. I have given orders to act summarily, and to storm the houses. I have besides sent sufficient means of destruction to achieve this difficult task. The Government of Versailles renews for the second time its vain rhodomontades, and talks of reducing us in twenty-four hours. Let powder be the means of carrying our answer. In short, the situation is good. After the complete organisation of the war battalions, it will be excellent." These accounts were in excess of the truth; but it is certain that the Versaillese troops failed, on the 15th, in their attempts to take Fort Vanvres. Although the attack and defence of Paris had now being going on for a fortnight, no very perceptible progress had been made on either side; and although, on Sunday, the 16th, there was again a good deal of skirmishing, the results were of an insignificant character, and the firing from the forts was to a great extent wasted in the air.

The Government at Versailles continued very anxious to explain and justify its position towards Paris and France. In a despatch to the Prefects, issued on the 11th of April, M. Thiers said:—"Do not believe the false reports spread abroad. The President of the Council does not dream of resigning, being perfectly in harmony with the National Assembly, and profoundly devoted to his political duties, however difficult. As to a conspiracy against the Republic, disbelieve that absurd and perfidious rumour disseminated by the Parisian insurgents; but we are preparing against them irresistible means which we should not seek to adopt but for our desire and hope of sparing bloodshed. Good citizens may be reassured. There is nothing fatal to foresee or to fear." On the previous day, the *Official Journal* of Versailles had published an article protesting against the calumnies uttered against the Assembly, which was accused of having betrayed the Republic, hoisted the white flag, and proclaimed a monarch. The truth of the matter, said the official writer, was that the Assembly had abstained from all discussions which might give rise to passionate dissensions, and had accepted the Republic as a fact, reserving to itself the right of putting that fact to the test of experience, but at the same time recognising that the best course to be pursued was for the members to range themselves under that banner which (according to the saying of M. Thiers) divided Frenchmen the least. The article went on:—"The Chief of the Executive Power has clearly and firmly laid down the programme which he has loyally accepted, and to which he will continue to adhere. The Assembly is convinced that nothing would be more fatal to the country than a personal competition for place. The Assembly rejects with horror a Buonapartist restoration, and, being

convinced that other claims would also be the signal for internal discord, it makes honest efforts to oppose a collective action of the whole nation to the misfortunes which are crushing France, in order to surmount the frightful tempest which has been let loose by the Empire and the invasion. Rebellion to overthrow the Assembly will be put down by the Republic, which only rests its authority on the consent of the national majority. If the detestable reign of the Commune could continue, France would perish in shameful convulsions. The prolongation of that situation of violence would bring about shame and ruin, the return of the foreigner, and the end of France. We have a firm hope that it has now reached its termination." This hope was unduly sanguine, but it could not be doubted that the Commune had very little support amongst the French people generally, and that sooner or later it must perish even in its main stronghold. Every day, fresh reinforcements of troops liberated from German fortresses were arriving at Versailles; and these were among the very best legions of France—men who had, indeed, been worsted by the superior generalship of the Prussians, but who were nevertheless brave, disciplined, and animated by that *esprit de corps* which makes the professional soldier indignant at being defied by amateurs. It is true that the Communal Guards were fighting better than at first; but no efforts on their part could withstand the power now being arrayed against Paris.

Further official statements appeared on the 16th of April, when M. Thiers said:—"The Government persists in its system of temporising for two reasons which it can avow—in the first place, to be able to collect forces so imposing that resistance will be impossible, and consequently less sanguinary; and, in the next place, to allow misguided men time to recover their reason. They are told that the Government wishes to destroy the Republic; which is absolutely false, its sole endeavour being to put an end to civil war, to restore order, credit, and labour, and to procure the evacuation of the territory by the discharge of the obligations contracted towards Prussia. These same misguided men are also told that we desire to shoot them; all which again is false, the Government granting pardons to all who lay down their arms, as it has done in the case of the 2,000 whom it now maintains at Belle Isle without exacting any service from them. They are also told that, being deprived of the subsidy which enables them to live, it is intended to cause them to die of hunger; which is as false as the other statements, since the Government has promised them some weeks' continuance of the subsidy to provide them with the means of awaiting the resumption of labour—a resumption which is certain, if order be restored, and submission to the law obtained." The truth of these denials by M. Thiers (which were also given in an answer he sent to a letter of remonstrance from the Archbishop of Paris, written from his prison) is in some respects questionable. Without crediting all the assertions of Communal writers with respect to atrocious cruelty and treachery of the Versailles troops towards the National Guards, and alleging frequent outrages on women, it is difficult to resist the conclusion that summary executions occasionally took place, after the soldiers had been excited by several days of conflict, and provoked by the threat of reprisals, to be executed on the hostages.

M. Jules Favre, who had been paying a visit to the German head-quarters at Rouen (where, as he stated privately, he was overwhelmed with civility by General Fabrice), made a speech in the Assembly on the 10th, in which he said he desired to give some information to the Chamber with respect to the efforts being made by the Government to restore the public peace, and to deliver the territory. As soon, he remarked, as the news of the Paris insurrection became known in Europe, the most universal sympathy for the Government was manifested, for every country felt that the French army was defending the cause of civilisation all over the world. The German authorities expressed a very justifiable uneasiness, as they feared that their conventions with France might be compromised by the new turn of events. Still, those authorities had never ceased to show the most implicit confidence in the Assembly. The French Government, notwithstanding calumnious reports to the contrary, had spared no pains to allay German apprehensions, but had constantly refused offers of German assistance, being fully persuaded that it was able by itself to put down the insurrection. It was of some importance, added M. Favre, that he should explain the attitude of the German authorities towards the Commune. On the 4th of April, a person belonging to the Commune made a written communication to General Fabrice. That document had since been shown to him (M. Favre). It professed to come from the Department of Foreign Relations of the Commune of Paris, and it ran as follows:—

"THE COMMUNE OF PARIS TO THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE 3RD CORPS.

"General,—The delegate of the Commune of Paris for Foreign Affairs has the honour to address to you the following observations. The city of Paris is inte

rested as much as the rest of France in the fulfilment of the peace conventions concluded with Prussia; and it is therefore the duty of Paris to ascertain what progress is being made in the execution of the treaty. I will therefore ask you to let me know especially whether the Versailles Government has paid the first instalment of five hundred millions, and whether, in default of this payment, the German generals have fixed a



GENERAL LECOMTE.

time for the evacuation of those districts of the Department of the Seine, and the forts, which form an integral part of the territory of the Commune of Paris. I should be much obliged to you, General, for an answer.

(Signed) "The Delegate for Foreign Affairs,
"PASCHAL GROUSSET."

M. Favre read this communication in a tragi-comic tone, and with a theatrical air, which drew forth shouts of laughter. The *Gaulois* afterwards ridiculed the Foreign Minister's manner in throwing contempt on Grousset, and said he surpassed Frederic Lemaitre, the actor. It was added by M. Favre that General Fabrice had returned no answer to the letter of Grousset; indeed, to have done so would have been an acknowledgment of the existence of the Commune as an independent Power distinct from France. Citizen Grousset, by implication, claimed as much in making use of the phrase—"an integral part of the territory of the Commune of Paris." Here was the assertion of a separate national existence; and the Commune was certainly in no position to make such a claim. The communication addressed to General Fabrice was a piece of gross impertinence; and the German authorities would have shown little respect for their own dignity had they treated it with anything but silent contempt.

Pursuing the same theme, M. Favre said that the same person who had signed the communication



GROUP OF PRISONERS.

to General Fabrice—viz., Paschal Grousset—had previously (as already related in these pages) addressed a circular to the representatives of foreign Powers, "assuring them of his fraternal sentiments, and of his desire to live in peace with all the world—always, of course," added M. Favre, "excepting France." The Foreign Minister said that he could not, any more than the members of the Corps Diplomatique, regard this circular as an interference with foreign affairs. The only unmistakable intervention in that department which he knew of was the robbery of all the plate in the Foreign Office on the Quai d'Orsay. Notwithstanding these bitter speeches, some attempts at conciliation were still made. A League for the Defence of the Rights of Paris was formed in that city; and M. Thiers, on the 4th of April, granted safe-conducts for three delegates of this League, named Desonnaz, Bonvalet, and Lafont. These persons had a consultation with M. Thiers, and, after their return to Paris, addressed to the Committee of the League a report of their mission, which was published on the 13th. The delegates here stated that, having communicated the programme of the League to M. Thiers, the latter replied that, as head of the only legal Government in France, he could not discuss the bases of a treaty, but was nevertheless disposed to make known his intentions as Chief of the Executive Power. He guaranteed the existence of the Republic so long as he remained in office. With regard to the municipal franchises, Paris would enjoy the same position as other towns, in accordance with the Communal law elaborated by the National Assembly. Neither more nor less than this would be granted. Steps would be taken to organise the National Guard of Paris, but M. Thiers could not admit the principle of the absolute exclusion of the army from the capital. He would not recognise those fighting against the National Assembly as belligerents, and he neither would nor could treat for the conclusion of an armistice; but if the National Guards of Paris did not fire upon the troops, the Versaillese would not fire either. He at the same time reserved to himself the faculty of recommencing hostilities, and added that the insurgents, by abandoning every kind of hostile attitude, would be safe against any prosecution, excepting only the assassins of Generals Clement Thomas and Lecomte. M. Thiers also said that he would continue the pay of the National Guards for some weeks longer. In a subsequent circular, the members of the League said that the statements of M. Thiers afforded guarantees neither for the maintenance of the Republic nor for the establishment of Communal liberty; but at the same time they blamed the Commune for not defining its views and requirements with greater exactness.

Under date April 12th, M. Thiers himself, in a circular to the Prefects, gave an account of the interview, and said that, although the just demands of France would be satisfied, "every attempt at secession, made by whatever portion of the country, would be energetically repressed in France, as it had been in America." The Chief of the Executive Power was careful to point out that these intermediaries had presented themselves at Versailles to make suggestions, "not in the name of the Commune—for, applying in that name, they would not have been received—but in the name of sincere Republicans, who desired the maintenance of the Republic, and who wished that leniency might be extended to the vanquished insurgents." It would seem from this that the delegates were not authorised by the Commune itself to treat with M. Thiers; and the two antagonists set their faces with stern and inflexible resolve towards the sanguinary end.

CHAPTER XXX.

Summons to Paris to Surrender—Supplementary Elections on April 16th—Decree for the Demolition of the Napoleon Column—History and Description of the Column—The Reign of the Revolution—Numerous Confiscations—Arbitrary Treatment of the Clergy—Infallible Atheism—Communal Decree for Postponing the Payment of Debts—Provision for the Families of National Guards falling in Battle—Arbitrary Arrests, and an Idiotic Acquittal—Letter of M. Guizot—Criticisms of a French Republican—An Insane Revolutionary Passion—The Germans in the Department of the Lower Seine—Trial of Communal Guards at Versailles—Fighting at Asnières and Neuilly—Progress of the Conflict from Day to Day—Insignificance of the General Results on Both Sides—Informal Armistice—The Starving Inhabitants of Neuilly—Bill passed in the National Assembly for granting a Municipal Constitution to Paris—Its main Features, and Communal Criticisms on it—Self-justification of the Commune—Reforms in the Communal Constitution—The Policy of Confiscation and of Menace.

ON the day that the Communists were rejoicing over the sonorous proclamations of Citizens Eudes and Cluseret, which declared that the Parisian Guards had gained wonderful victories over the

army of the Government, it was announced that Paris had received notice to surrender in four-and-twenty hours. This was on Sunday, April 16th. The Communal authorities laughed such a summons to scorn. They professed to be more certain than ever that they should win, and they proceeded the same day to the supplementary elections, which had for some time been postponed, and which M. Rochefort had recently blamed them for not holding. The number of members to be elected was about thirty; but so little interest was taken in the ceremony that in several districts the returns were void because an eighth of the electors had not voted. In all the arrondissements the diminution in the number of votes, as compared with the total given on the 26th of March, was very great—in some instances, most striking. The mass of the citizens were evidently indifferent to the result of the ballot. They knew that the men in power would retain their places until violently expelled by the army of M. Thiers; and they felt assured that the period of expulsion could not be distant. A large number of those who had some faith in the Commune three weeks earlier, were beginning to see how ill-grounded was their belief. The Red Republican ship was obviously sinking, and "the very rats instinctively had quit it." Notwithstanding these defections, however, the revolutionary leaders continued to boast of their power, of their popular support, and of their certain triumph over those whom they were pleased to call the Royalists of Versailles. They were determined, moreover, to leave behind them a very striking evidence of their rule. Towards the middle of April it was resolved to destroy the famous Napoleon column in the Place Vendôme. A decree to this effect was issued on the 13th, and it was there stated that the demolition of the pillar had been ordered on the grounds that it was "a monument of barbarism, a symbol of brute force and false glory, an affirmation of the military spirit, a negation of international law, a permanent insult cast by the victors on the vanquished, and a perpetual attack on one of the great principles of the French Republic—Fraternity." The good taste of all such erections is doubtless very questionable when regarded in the severest lights of morality and philosophical reason; but when such lofty principles were put forth by men who had not scrupled to plunge their country into civil war for the sake of gaining their own selfish ends, it was difficult to deny the justice of M. Favre's sarcasm, that the Commune desired to live at peace with all nations, excepting France.

The Napoleon column (the destruction of which did not take place until the latter days of the Commune) was strictly designated the Column of the Grand Army, and was about 155 feet high, including the pedestal. It was built of cut stone, and coated with bronze bas-reliefs representing, in a series of seventy-six tableaux, the chief exploits of the Grand Army from its leaving the camp of Boulogne to the peace following the battle of Austerlitz. Its site was occupied, previous to the revolution at the close of the eighteenth century, by an equestrian statue of Louis XIV., which was pulled down and broken to pieces by the mob in 1792. The column erected by Napoleon on the space thus left vacant was of the Doric order, and was to a considerable extent a copy of the Trajan column at Rome. The bronzes wound spirally round the shaft from the pedestal to the lantern, and formed a complete history of the campaign of 1805. They circled the pillar twenty-two times, and formed a twisted band of 840 feet. The figures were three feet high, and were said to number 2,000. The pedestal also was covered on three sides with bas-reliefs representing arms, uniforms, flags, and other military gear taken from Austria. As, at the time these were cast, Napoleon was desirous of concluding an alliance with Russia, he gave directions to the sculptor to erase from his designs everything having reference to the defeat of the Czar, and to make it appear as if Austria alone had been beaten in the campaign. The artist (Launay) was greatly annoyed at this, and even ventured to remonstrate; but of course his susceptibilities were not allowed to prevail over reasons of State. The works were commenced in August, 1806, and terminated in the same month, 1810. The first intention of the Emperor was that the statue on the summit of the column should be that of Charlemagne; but after the victories of Jena, Eylau, and Friedland, he yielded to the suggestions of his flatterers, and substituted a figure of himself in Imperial robes. After the fall of the Empire, this was removed; but in the reign of Louis Philippe the column was crowned by a statue of Napoleon in his well-known military costume, in which the hat, epaulettes, boots, redingote, lorgnette, and sword worn at Austerlitz, were exactly copied. The latter statue was cast in gun-metal, from cannon taken by the French armies under the Empire. It was replaced during the Second Empire by another figure of the great man in his robes; and this shared the fate of the column when the day of its destruction arrived.

In one of their numerous addresses, the Communal Council took credit to themselves for the admirable state of order which existed in Paris.

In a certain sense this was true, though street beggary existed to a fearful extent. A correspondent of the *Daily News*, writing on April 17th, said that private crime had wonderfully diminished. "In such a state of society," he remarked, "it might be expected that individuals would take advantage of public disturbance and the dislocation of authority, to pursue their own private ends, robbing and killing at their pleasure. But here, on the contrary—it may be from terror—the people are so well behaved (putting their political passions out of account) that I never felt more secure than I do now. What dangers threaten us are the dangers arising from political passion, and not those which come of private hatred or cupidity. And, as times go, the people are wonderfully civil. I have brushed up against the wild, unkempt National Guards of Belleville again and again. I have always found them, and all the officials of the Commune, exceedingly good-humoured and genial. Under the old order of things, I should expect from a sentinel a rough answer, or from a door-keeper a listless, lazy, unwilling look. Now the sentinel 'citizens' me, and I 'citizen' him; but our little colloquy goes on in the easiest terms." It is not unusual, in periods of revolution, for the ordinary forms of crime to disappear for a while, as smaller diseases are said to be sometimes absorbed in greater. The Commune was in itself an immense crime, which seemed, by its heat and acrimony, to burn up and dissipate all minor forms of wrong-doing. It was certainly a small matter that there should be no burglaries when the governing body was committing robbery wholesale, and confiscating the property of all persons and institutions against whom or which it felt an animosity. A quantity of plate was seized at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and sent to the Mint to be melted down into specie. Several churches were pillaged of their ornaments and vessels, which were at once turned into coin. Delegates from the Commune at the same time visited various warehouses, to take stock of the goods in store, and a Commission was appointed to inquire into the number of workshops and manufactories in Paris which were closed through the absence of their owners, or owing to the refusal of the proprietors to open them under the existing circumstances. The Commission was to prepare a report, showing under what conditions these places might be transferred to co-operative societies of working men, to be opened by them for their own benefit. In this case, it is true, compensation was spoken of; but, as the indemnity was to be fixed by a court of arbitration which would certainly be formed in the interests of the Commune, and as the sale, if such it can be called, was to be compulsory, it is evident that the interests of the manufacturers would not be very closely consulted. The manufacturers were indeed receiving very hard measure; for whereas those who had shut up their establishments were threatened with the confiscation of their property, on terms to be fixed by the confiscators themselves, those who kept their workshops open were arrested, because by so doing they prevented the men in their employment from joining the National Guard.

The clergy, however, fared even worse than the men of business. Not only were the churches pillaged, but the ecclesiastics themselves were subjected to insult. All the clergy of Montmartre, the great revolutionary quarter, were arrested, and the following placard was posted on the closed doors of the church:—

"April 10, 1871.—Whereas priests are thieves, and churches are haunts where they have morally assassinated the masses in dragging France under the talons of the scoundrels Buonaparte, Favre, and Trochu, the delegate of Les Carrières at the ex-Prefecture of Police orders the Church of Saint-Pierre to be closed, and decrees the arrest of the ecclesiastics and Ignorantins.

"LE MOUSSU."

Rochefort published an article in his journal, the *Mot d'Ordre*, on "The Church and its Treasures," in which he said that he not only did not disavow the support he had given to the ransacking of the churches, but that, if he knew of any other treasure belonging to the clergy, he would indicate it to the Commune. "Our eternal belief," he went on, "is that, Jesus Christ having been born in a stable, the only treasure that Notre Dame ought to possess is a bundle of straw. As for the goods of the Church, we do not hesitate to declare them national property, for the single reason that they proceed from the generosity of those to whom the Church has promised Paradise; and the promise of imaginary returns made to obtain any property is qualified as swindling by every code. . . . . 'Your purse or hell'—such is, in the present day, the only programme of the Catholic clergy; and as the French nation no longer believes in hell, it is natural that in case of need it should take back the purse." The question of the resumption of Church property by the nation from whence it came (exclusive, of course, of private endowments) is a perfectly fair one to be considered by any duly constituted Government, acting with the sanction of the national representatives. It is a principle which has acquired great force and authority during recent years, and which has been acted on in

several countries not ruled by extreme revolutionists. But it was a monstrous exercise of authority on the part of a body such as the Commune to attempt to settle, in a species of local vestry (allowing the Council to have had any legal existence at all), a question which is distinctly one of national policy. The way in which M. Rochefort put the case, moreover, was simply a begging of the question, and that in a manner designed, not to convince, but to irritate. It proceeded on a bullying assumption that because the writer believed or disbelieved certain things, such conclusions were necessarily, absolutely, and infallibly true, and that any one who professed to think otherwise was obviously either a fool or a knave, and should be made to suffer accordingly. That is to say, M. Rochefort, by implication, set himself up for a Pope, and proclaimed pains and penalties against all who would not accept his *dicta* on a number of questions which have divided the reflective portion of mankind for ages. What was this but imitating the very dogmatism he denounced? The progress of knowledge, of inquiry, of freedom, and of liberal thought, has tended, in a marked and beneficent degree, to circumscribe the authority of Infallible Churches; but society would be no better off if its emancipation in this respect were to be followed by an equally base subjection to an Infallible Atheism.

Having released tenants from a certain proportion of their rents, the Commune, on April 18th, issued a decree for postponing the payment of debts. It was thus expressed:—

"The Commune of Paris decrees:—

"Art. 1.—The payment of debts of all kinds incurred to the present date will be effected within a period of three years from the 15th of next July.

"Art. 2.—The total of the sums due will be divided into twelve equal instalments, payable every three months from the same date.

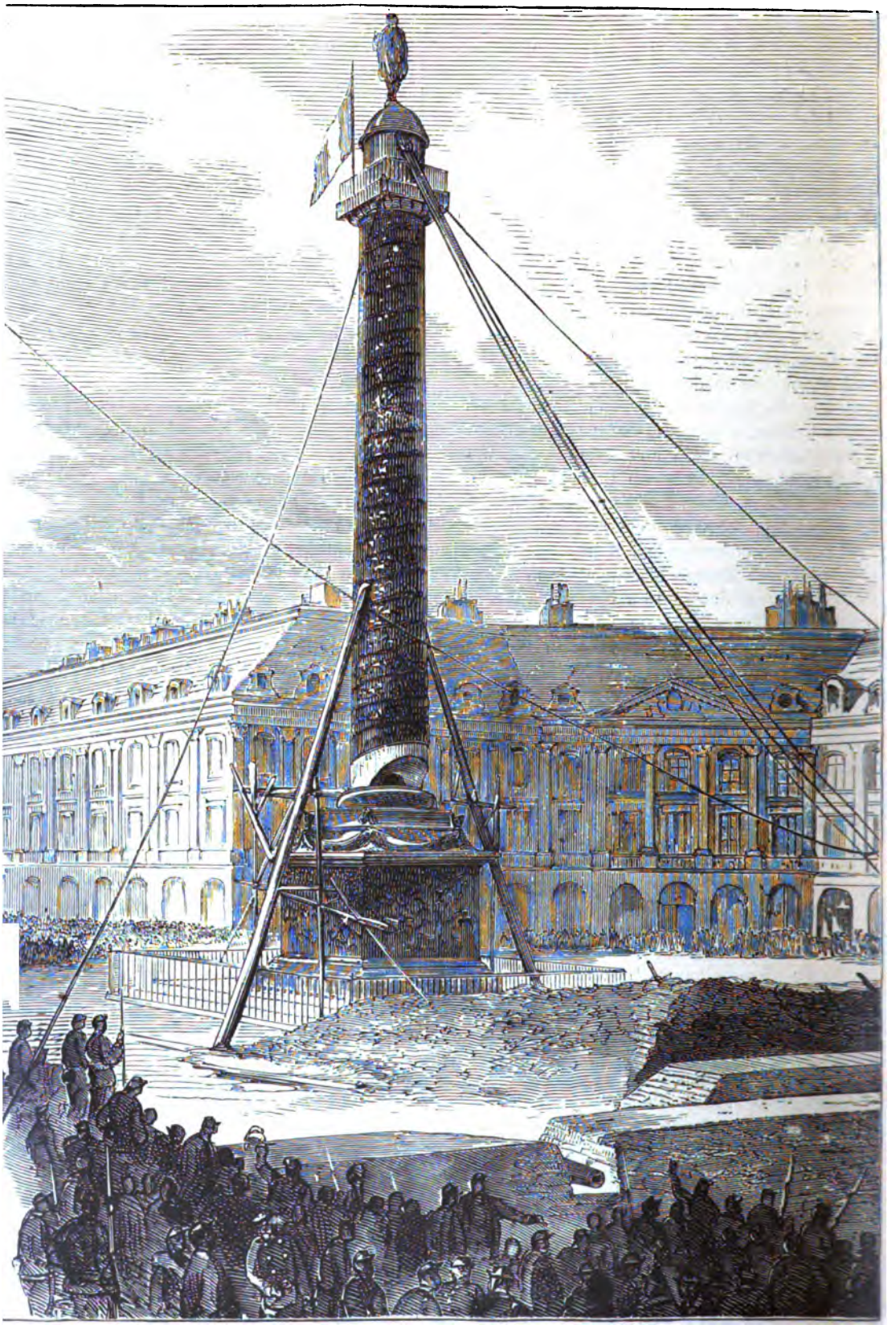
"Art. 4.—Proceedings in the event of non-acceptance or non-payment can only be taken upon each particular instalment.

"Art. 5.—Every debtor, availing himself of the delay accorded by the present decree, who shall during that period divert, alienate, or make away with his assets to defraud his creditor, shall be considered guilty of fraudulent bankruptcy, if in business, and, if not in business, of swindling; and proceedings may be taken against him by his creditor, or by the Public Minister.

"THE COMMUNE OF PARIS."

A few days earlier than this, the Communal Council had made provision for the families and other connections of the troops then fighting for the establishment of the new order. The widow of every National Guard who might fall in battle was to have a pension of six hundred francs a year. Any woman occupying the position of mistress to a National Guard was to be placed on an equally favourable footing. All the children, whether legitimate or not, were to receive a franc a day until they were eighteen years of age. Finally, the father, mother, brother, or sister of a National Guard, who might be dependent on him, was to enjoy a pension varying from 100 to 800 francs a year. It is hardly conceivable that any of the men so desperately giving their lives to the idol of their worship could have derived much comfort from these promises. The most enthusiastic must have doubted of immediate success, even if they believed in the resurrection of the Communal idea under more favourable circumstances. But it answered the purpose of the revolutionary leaders to assume that their power was assured and permanent; and so they promised pensions to the victims of their sanguinary dream, even while the dream itself was growing dim before the dawn.

The authorities continued to suppress newspapers; though the newspapers sometimes ventured to appear, in defiance of the suppression. Arrests were also frequently made, and it was said that by the middle of April as many as 1,200 persons had been apprehended on suspicion. Sometimes the accused seem to have been set free with as little reason as they were originally detained. An instance was related at the time, which shows the preposterous character of the proceedings before the so-called courts of the Commune, as well as the arbitrary nature of the arrests. The indictment in this case set forth:—"The herein-named Alexander Isidore X., Vicomte de ——, thirty-six years of age, born at Savigny, in the department of the Côte d'Or, possessor of a considerable fortune, which is supposed to have been acquired by unlawful means, was arrested on the 29th of March, at one P.M., by order of the Commune, in his own dwelling. His aristocratic manners, which denote a clerical education, the luxury which obtained in his dwelling, the papers of a compromising character which were found there, and his equivocal answers on his arrest, demonstrate peremptorily to us that he was carrying on a criminal correspondence with Versailles." "Accused," said the Judge, "you have the right to speak. What have you to say in your defence?" "Very little, citizen. I was born in the department of the Seine, on the 8th of December, 1825. Far from being a viscount, I am called André Serlay. I live in the Rue des Marais, on the sixth floor, in a room lighted by one window in the roof. The only papers which can have been found in my



PREPARATIONS FOR DESTROYING THE NAPOLEON COLUMN.

luxurious dwelling are a *livret* showing that I am a journeyman cooper, and that I have worked for two years for M. Vaillant; an election paper, and the bill of my expenses with M. Bourgeade, wine-merchant. As to Versailles, I never set foot in it." "Citizen André Serlay," said the Judge, "the truthful account with which you have defended yourself proves your innocence; you are free." If it was just to arrest this man, it was certainly ridiculous to release him simply because he said he was not the person he was alleged to be.



DESTRUCTION OF THE ARMS OF THE INSURGENTS.

In the midst of all this turmoil, the venerable voice of M. Guizot was again heard discoursing on the situation in the columns of the *Times*. The aged statesman here remarked—and assuredly not without reason—that the faults of France caused him even more sorrow than her misfortunes. "But," he added, "I never lose faith in her good qualities, although they may seem to be obliterated by the faults; and I am sure that the good which is in her will open up infinite resources even when her prospects are darkest. The glory of the siege is followed by the disgrace of falling under the dominion of a violent and incapable mob, and becoming a prey to a detestable and absurd outbreak of demagogic fury. I must acknowledge that this has caused me more sorrow than surprise, for I have had some experience of revolutionary crises and their excesses. I know how my country falls into them, and also how it finds a way out again." M. Guizot derived comfort from the fact that the revolution was not general, and did not spread. The National Assembly and the Executive, he thought, had acted with intelligence, prudence, and justice.

A very different view was expressed in a letter from a French gentleman to an English friend, some extracts from which were published in the *Daily News*. The writer was described as an eminent member of the scientific world, who had been elected to the National Assembly, but who resigned immediately after giving his vote against the Treaty of Peace. In the opinion of this gentleman, the civil war was the work of the Assembly. The conflict, he believed, might have been averted had the Chamber definitely proclaimed the Republic, instead of accepting it provisionally, and at the same time hampering it with innumerable conditions; had the seat of the Assembly at once been removed to Paris; had the municipal rights of the capital been recognised; and had a law been passed which, by dealing with the question of rents, should have thrown on the provinces that

had escaped the invaders some part of the burden borne by Paris during its long siege. "Instead of this," continued the writer, "the Assembly has let slip no opportunity of manifesting its hatred of Paris and of the Republic. It prevented Garibaldi from speaking; it howled down Victor Hugo; it proclaimed, by the mouths of those whom it allowed to speak, that its intention was to decapitalise Paris: and when, in the committee-rooms, it was replied to these overbearing orators, 'You wish, then, for civil war?' they answered, 'If civil war arises—if Paris rebels—we will crush her.' That was not enough: Paris was wise, and gave no sign. But it was necessary to bring about, as in June, 1848, an insurrection, in order to have an excuse for smothering the Republic. It was necessary, moreover, that the signal for this insurrection should not be the proclamation of a monarchy, for such a step would have roused every city in France. What, then, did the Executive do? It named Vinoy Governor of Paris—Vinoy, the *mitrailleur* of the 2nd December; it named Valentin Prefect of the Police, and d'Aurelles de Paladines Commander-in-Chief of the National Guard; and, as a crowning insult, it endeavoured to disarm the National Guards under pretence of reorganising them." The Parisians, accordingly, in the view of this writer, were fully justified in rising against the Assembly. His sympathies were not wholly with the men of the Commune; but he felt that, if the Commune succumbed, the Republic was lost, and that the restoration of a Monarchy in France, where the Monarchical feeling had disappeared, would be the death of the country. Yet, while he desired the triumph of the Commune, he believed in the triumph of Versailles. The fall of the insurrectionary Government would be followed by the destruction of the Republic; and the Monarchy thus founded in bloodshed would in its turn be swept away by a fresh convulsion, after some years of systematic opposition. Thus matters would go on until France sank to the level of the South American Republics, or even lower.

It would be superfluous here to repeat the arguments already set forth in previous pages against the main conclusion of this political critic, nor those tending to an agreement with some of his strictures on the Assembly. But it may be remarked that what he himself asserts as to the Monarchical tendencies of the Assembly throws great doubt on his statement that the Monarchical feeling had disappeared from France. The truth is that the writer committed the mistake of all French Republicans, and either identified Paris with France, or in effect denied the right of France to have any opinion distinct from that of Paris. It would appear that France in the aggregate was still Monarchical, although Paris and some of the other large towns were Republican. The determination of Paris not to be content with gradual reforms, but to make revolution upon revolution in the endeavour to impose a Republican form of government on the unwilling provinces, was the real cause of that state of periodical convulsion which has distracted France for so many years, and has so lamentably retarded all real progress. If the country should ever really "sink to the level of the South American Republics"—an event which sometimes seems not improbable—it will be owing to that insane revolutionary passion which, about once in every twenty years, gains the mastery in Paris, and threatens the whole land with disruption if it do not submit.

A third expression of opinion with respect to the Commune was contained in a letter addressed by M. Louis Blanc to M. Cernuschi, the editor of the *Siècle*. M. Blanc here declared that he was as much a Socialist as ever, and that still, as formerly, he desired to arrive gradually, and by practical means, at a solution of the great problem, how to effect the moral, intellectual, and physical amelioration of the condition of the poorer classes, by co-operation instead of antagonism, and by association instead of conflict. In answer to a charge that he had recently exhibited a nervous fear lest "the chain of the past should be broken," he observed that he did not believe such a thing either desirable or possible, but that he should regard it as extremely deplorable if the chain were to be broken in the interests of the Federalism represented by the Commune. The principle for which he would fight as long as he could hold a pen was the principle of the first Revolution—that embodied in the words, "The Republic one and indivisible." M. Blanc then continued:—"France advancing united and compact to the pacific conquest of its liberty and that of the world, with Paris—the immortal Paris—for capital—is a prospect which tempts me more, I admit, than France reverting, after being torn in pieces, to that Italian Federalism of the Middle Ages, which was the cause of continual intestine contentions in Italy, and which delivered her, lacerated by herself, to the blows of every foreign invader. Not that I am for centralisation carried to extremes. Far from it. I consider that the Commune represents the idea of unity not less truly than the State, although under another aspect. The State corresponds with the principle of nationality, the Commune corresponds with the principle of association: if the State is the

edifice, the Commune is the foundation. Now, upon the solidity of the foundation, that of the edifice depends. Hence it follows that in recognising the right of the Commune to govern itself—to elect its magistrates (beginning with the Mayor), to control their office, to provide, in a word, for everything which constitutes its own life, for everything which its autonomy realises—the cause of national unity is really served. But, just as it is necessary that the municipalities should be free in their movements—in everything which specially concerns each of them—so it is necessary that the bond which unites them one to the other, and attaches them to a common centre, should be vigorously fastened. Just as decentralisation is necessary in everything affecting local interests, so would it be dangerous if extended to general interests." It was in conformity with good sense, M. Blanc continued, to attribute what is personal to the individual, what is communal to the Commune, and what is national to the nation. Instead of doing this, however, Frenchmen were cutting each other's throats under the eyes of the enemy. Well might M. Louis Blanc despair of his country; but of all the utterances of distinguished men at that unhappy period none were more admirable and philosophical than this.

Republic or no Republic, the Germans were determined to see after their own interests; and it was on this account, and with a view to the possibility of events rendering it necessary for them to occupy Paris, that General Fabrice moved his head-quarters from Rouen to St. Denis. To a correspondent of the English press who had an interview with him, the general expressed a wish that the complication in Paris might soon come to an end, as he would rather that the German army should not be obliged to interfere in the struggle then being fought out between Frenchmen, and it was the desire of the Germans to return home as soon as possible. General von Pape, the officer commanding at St. Denis previous to the arrival of Fabrice, told another correspondent that the sole motive which would induce the Prussians to interpose would be a fear that the Communists, if successful, might refuse to ratify the conditions of peace, or pay the indemnity; but he appeared to consider that there was little probability of this, while the invaders held so large a part of France under martial law, and were in a position to help themselves out of the revenues of the conquered country. At the same time, however, he gave the correspondent an impression that the Prussian Government was ready to do anything short of active and direct interference to assist the party of order in putting down the insurrection. The occupation of so considerable a portion of the country placed the invaders in a favourable position for doing so if they pleased; but at the same time it perpetuated the feeling of irritation against Germany. At Rouen there were still three regiments of infantry, with a corresponding force of cavalry and artillery—altogether, about 12,000 men; while the department of the Lower Seine had to support an army of 20,000. Until nearly the end of March, the inhabitants were obliged to lodge and feed these troops, without any compensation; but after that date provisions were served out by the German authorities. The people, however, had still to provide free quarters; but they were to some extent remunerated by the amount of money which the Germans spent with the shopkeepers. A notification, signed by General Göben, appeared in the journals of the department on the 13th of April, nominating Count Lehndroff Stenory as civil commissary, to assume the administrative direction of all that concerned the interests of the German soldiers, particularly the execution of orders emanating from the Commander-in-Chief, the enumeration and distribution of troops, the surveillance of the press, of safety, and of health, the working of the railways, &c. This notification was followed by a proclamation from the Count, to the effect that the state of siege, with all its consequences, would for the present be maintained by the German authorities in the departments occupied by them.

The Communal Guards taken in arms were now being tried at Versailles. They were confined in cellars under the stables of the Château d'Artois, and their examination was conducted before a Judge of Instruction, who sat in a large room on the ground-floor of the barracks facing the château, and who was assisted by five younger magistrates. The treatment of these prisoners was characterised by all that disregard of fairness which is commonly observed in the proceedings of French courts. The Judge, in accordance with the habit of those functionaries in France, reviled the accused much as Sir Edward Coke reviled Sir Walter Raleigh on his trial for high-treason. Coke, however, was not the Judge, but the prosecuting counsel; so that the case was not so bad, though bad enough. Some old men among the captured Communal troops asked permission to sit down. The Judge refused, and one of the Assistant-Judges exclaimed, "Wretches who engage in such a cause as yours have no claim upon the indulgence of the authorities. Stand where you are, and let there be no shifting to either right or left. We want to see your faces in all their ignominy of expression."

Some of the prisoners behaved with self-possession and firmness; others showed the most pitiable fear. A big fellow named Achilles Le Gros—a butcher's assistant—belied his Christian name by sobbing and groaning with dismay, though his personal appearance answered very well to his surname. Another prisoner, whose calling was that of an artificer in false jewellery, boldly avowed his participation in the Communal movement. He was asked if he had been forced to join the insurgents. He replied, "No. I heard that Versailles and Prussia were in the same shop, and that was enough to make me go to the front." "What else did you hear?" "That Bismarck and the Assembly were plotting together to give us a King, and that two Pretenders were hovering between Rouen and Versailles." "And what if they were?" "What if they were! I would willingly be hacked in pieces to prevent a Monarchical restoration. We don't want a Monarch in Paris; and all that I regret is not having done more work with my gun in firing at the Royalists. When I shot into the crowd, I said to myself, 'What a pity there is no Pretender there!' As I was blazing away, somebody arrested me. That is the whole history of the affair, and make what you can of it, for it is the last you will get out of me."*

Considerable fighting occurred at Asnières and Neuilly on Monday, April 17th, and it would seem that the Communists were taken by surprise. Their position at Asnières was strongly barricaded and protected by earthworks in several directions; a long trench united the principal posts of the rebels; and seven armour-plated locomotives were placed on the neighbouring railway to aid in the defence. But the Versaillese had, unknown to the Parisian forces, armed the redoubt of Genevilliers, and placed heavy naval guns in position at Colombes; in consequence of which, the Federalists (as the followers of the Commune now began to call themselves) were outflanked on the right, as well as attacked in front. The mitrailleuses had only time to fire one volley when they were silenced. The Communal Guards defended the railway station for a short time; but in less than an hour they were driven across the Seine. Reinforcements were then sent for by Dombrowski, and after a while his troops endeavoured to regain the ground they had lost. Dombrowski led a desperate assault in person, and was slightly wounded in the neck; but by four o'clock in the afternoon the insurgents were driven out of Neuilly, and forced to retreat as far as Porte Maillot. Several were drowned in endeavouring to get across the Seine, owing to the breaking of a bridge of boats which had been thrown over the stream; many others were killed in actual conflict: and two battalions were taken prisoners. Such, at least, was the account given by writers opposed to the Commune. The Communists themselves did not admit such a defeat; and it appears certain that if they were entirely driven back over the Seine on the 17th, they had again crossed it by the following day, for a Versailles despatch of the 19th said that on the 18th three battalions of gendarmes charged and took barricades and several houses in Bois Colombes, and that the insurgents were still in possession of Asnières. It is probable, therefore, that, although the Versailles troops gained some positions on the 17th (such as the Château Becon, which was undoubtedly won), their success was by no means so great as it was represented. Very little fighting occurred on the 18th, owing to the quantity of rain which fell; but there were a few skirmishes at Neuilly and Asnières, at the entrenchments before Issy, and at the railway station of Clamart. On the 19th, the cannonade, and the fire of the mitrailleuses and skirmishers, continued throughout the day between the belligerents at Courbevoie, Porte Maillot, Puteaux, Asnières, and Levallois. Armour-plated railway vans constantly operated against the Versailles troops between Asnières and Courbevoie. Dombrowski returned from Asnières in the morning, after having strengthened those points which were the most threatened, and given orders to the officers at Neuilly to keep up a cross-fire upon the Versailles guns. Barricades and trenches were constructed in all the streets and avenues facing the southern and western gates; and a battery was erected on the heights of Passy, whence the Federalists could command Neuilly and Levallois. At the same time, according to the Communists, the armour-plated carriages operated as far as Château Becon, and regularly every night silenced the fire of the batteries which the enemy was endeavouring to establish in that position. The struggle for the possession of Asnières was long and bloody; but no definite result had been attained by the end of the day.

By the 20th, the Versailles army had consolidated its position at the approaches to the Neuilly bridge by reinforcements of artillery, which enabled it to pour a raking fire down the two chief streets of the village. The Federals replied with great obstinacy from their barricades; and their guns in the Levallois Cemetery cannonaded the Asnières railway station, where the Versailles troops were strongly entrenched. Porte Maillot and the ramparts on each side were by this time a mass of

* *Daily News* Versailles Correspondent.

ruins; and both on this day and the following (the 21st) the attacking forces appear to have pressed the Communists closer, and to have made the fire of their artillery severely felt. The insurgents, however, still held their ground in the main, though any prospect of ultimate success was becoming every day more vague and doubtful. The same state of things continued for several successive days. Violent encounters between the hostile forces took place from time to time at various points; and the result was little else than the effusion of so much blood. Sometimes one side would gain a little advantage, sometimes the other; but the Federalists were not as yet driven into Paris, nor was the grasp of the Versaillese shaken off. As compared with their position at the commencement of active hostilities on the 2nd of April, the Communal troops had certainly lost ground; but they were now fighting better than at first, and were exhibiting, from day to day, greater skill and determination in the defence of important positions. The army of the Government held the park and barracks of Neuilly, and had established a battery at the Paris end of the bridge; but the village itself was in possession of the insurgents, and was the scene of repeated and desperate conflicts. Moreover, the guns of Porte Maillot did great execution in the ranks of the attacking force, and made it imprudent, if not impossible, for them to approach any nearer. This seems to have been, in brief, the relative situation of the two armies towards the north-west of Paris at the beginning of the last week of April. The details given by both sides are a mass of confusion and contradiction. Versaillese and Federalists vied with each other in boasting and untruthfulness, as, only a few months before, French and Germans had done. That the Versailles Ministers were not altogether satisfied with the progress they were making, is shown by the fact that they now talked of standing on the defensive in the positions they had won, and of waiting until MacMahon had a larger force at his command before they directed a serious attack against the forts which still defied them.

A kind of armistice was observed at Neuilly on the 20th, on behalf of the inhabitants, who, being afraid of issuing out of their cellars, lest they should be shot, ran great risk of perishing with hunger. Indeed, it is said that some actually died in their subterranean retreats. A more formal armistice was sought by General Cluseret on the 23rd; but M. Thiers refused to grant it, though he assented to a suspension of arms of twelve hours' duration, to allow of the evacuation of the bombarded villages. This was to take place on the 25th of April. The reason why M. Thiers would not consent to a regular armistice was that he would do nothing that could possibly be construed into a recognition of the insurgents. He is said (by the Communal negotiators) to have declared that he would bombard Paris as soon as the Prussians delivered up the forts, and to have added, "What are some shot-riddled houses, and some victims, in comparison with the re-establishment of the legitimate power? Doubtless it will cost much to bombard poor Paris, and my blood runs cold at the thought; but I must establish at any price the authority of this calumniated Assembly." The truce afforded to the Parisians that which they enjoy above all things—the opportunity of a holiday. A large number of sight-seers went out to look at Neuilly, which was in a fearfully battered condition. Several of the Paris householders, also, took advantage of the occasion for getting away with their goods. A great number of the poorer inhabitants of the disputed territory determined on remaining; but this seems to have been because they had not the means of moving. A system for supplying these starving wretches with food was organised by delegates of the Commune, and the whole affair passed off very well. The suspension of arms was, on the whole, respected on both sides, though barricades and other defensive works were constructed by each. Mines were laid by the Communists in front of their barricades, and forty cannon were held in reserve. The situation of the insurgents was in truth getting grave. Dombrowski was obliged continually to change his head-quarters, as the peasants gave information of the situation of his house, which was thereupon vigorously shelled. One of these places was struck by sixteen shells in four-and-twenty hours. Two burst in the general's bedroom without injuring any one. The troops of the Line and the Communal Guards came very close together during the truce; but any attempt on the part of the latter to induce the former to fraternise was sternly repelled. The most sanguine of the Federalists must have been convinced by this time that the regular army was determined to uphold the Government of Versailles.

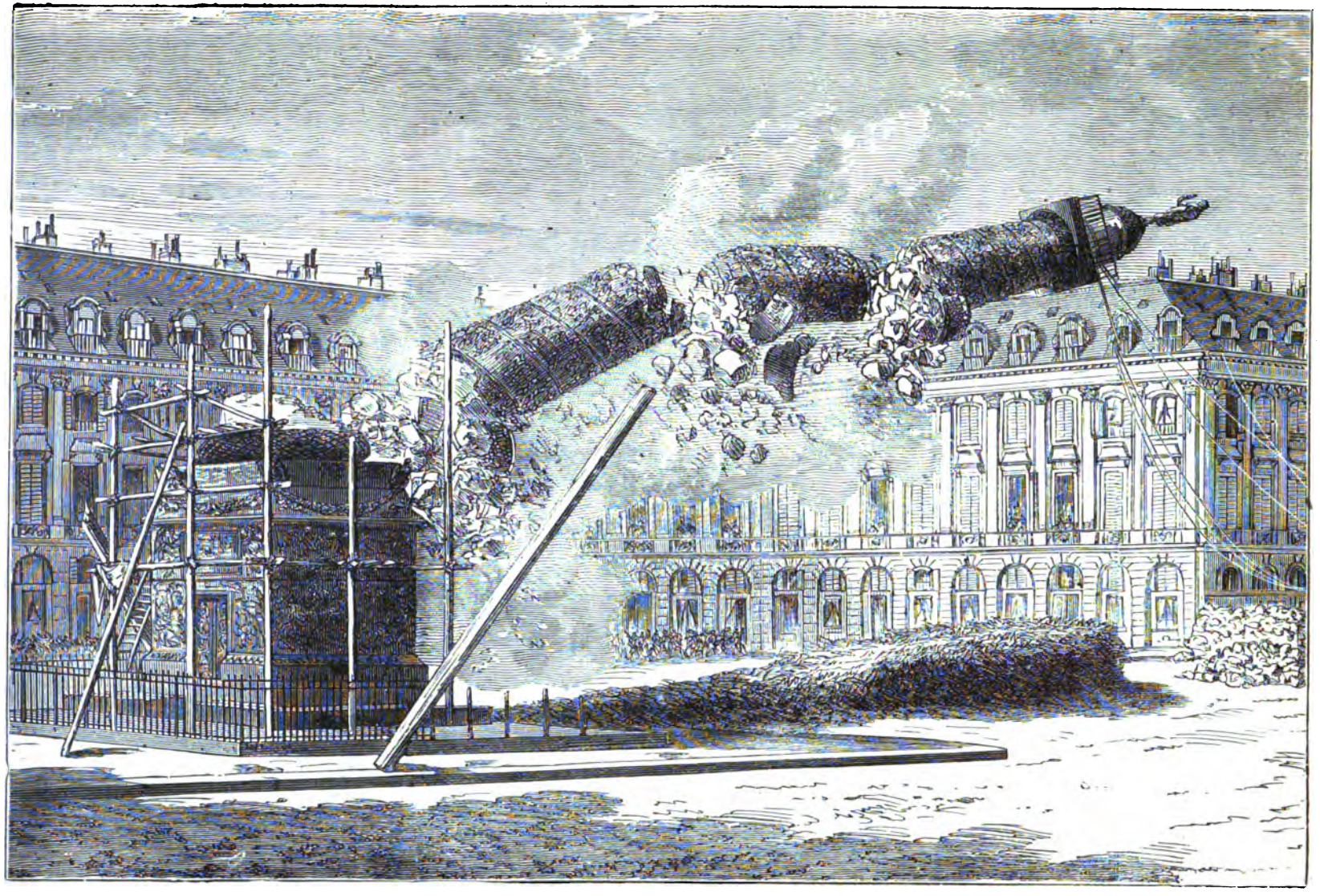
In the course of April, the National Assembly passed the law for granting a municipal constitution to Paris. It was very far, however, from giving satisfaction to the insurgents, even on that special ground. M. Vésinier, in his "History of the Commune of Paris," speaks of the law as "an indubitable proof of the reactionary spirit of the Assembly as to election and other matters." The following, according to this authority, were the

principal articles of the law:—Municipal elections were to be held over the whole of France; the powers conferred by the electors not to extend beyond three years. The municipal commissions were to give up their functions, &c. The law of July 3rd, 1849, for the choice of Mayors, was provisionally re-instituted. Of the twenty arrondissements of Paris, each was to nominate three members to the Municipal Council, elected from eligible dwellers in the arrondissement in which their business was carried on, and who were of at least three years' standing. Each department of the twenty arrondissements was to have one Mayor and three adjuncts, selected by the Chief of the Executive Power. The Prefect of the Seine and the Prefect of Police were to be present at the sittings of the Municipal Council, with the right of discussion. The Municipal Council was only to be convoked by the Prefect of the Seine. A special meeting (not to last more than a month) was to be held every year for the presentation and discussion of the budget; and the proceedings of the Municipal Council were to be limited to the voting of the budget, and to deliberation on objects of municipal administration. M. Vésinier remarks that the whole economy of this law was contained in the reactionary provisions, the object of which was to limit the suffrages of the citizens by imposing a residential qualification of three years, and to curb the deliberations of the council by placing it under the control of the Mayors and the Prefect of Police—functionaries nominated by the Government. The body thus created had no other right than that of voting the budget presented to it: it was a voting machine for the Ministers. The bill does indeed seem to have been not sufficiently popular in its character; but the possession of the voting power by the Council, and the fact that the municipal budget could not be passed without its sanction, were valuable qualities in the measure, and might have been turned to the most profitable account, had the Communal party possessed patience, sense, and patriotism. Where there is a representative assembly (even based on a restricted suffrage), with a grip upon the purse-strings, all reforms are possible, although the process may be slow. The inability of the French to understand this great political fact has led to their repeated revolutions, and their utter failure in all real progress. But, on the present occasion, the determination of the Commune not to accept the compromise offered by the country may be very readily accounted for. The leaders of the revolutionary party were bent on acquiring predominance, and nothing short of that would satisfy them. Paris was to be made the stronghold of the Red Republic, and "the rural majority" were to be taught their places, and made to obey the mandates of the Hôtel de Ville.

Another piece of self-justification appeared in the *Official Journal* of the Commune on the 20th of April. It took the form of a declaration of principles and a vindication of motives, and was dated the previous day. The precise character of the movement of the 18th of March, it was argued, had been misunderstood and unknown, and it had been calumniated by the politicians at Versailles. "What does Paris demand?" asked the official writer; and he proceeded to reply:—

"The recognition and consolidation of the Republic, and the absolute autonomy of the Commune extended to all places in France; thus assuring to each the integrity of its rights, and to every Frenchman the full exercise of his faculties and aptitudes as a man, a citizen, and a producer. The autonomy of the Commune has no other limit than its rights. The autonomy is equal for all Communes who are adherents of the contract, the association of which ought to secure the unity of France. The inherent rights of the Commune are to vote the Communal budget of receipts and expenses, the improving and alteration of taxes, the direction of local services, the organisation of the magistracy, internal police, and education; and to secure the administration of the property belonging to the Commune, the choice by election or competition, with the responsibility and permanent right of control and revocation, of the Communal magistrates and officials of all classes, the absolute guarantee of individual liberty and liberty of conscience, and the permanent intervention of the citizens in Communal affairs by the free manifestations of their ideas and the free defence of their interests. Guarantees are given to those manifestations by the Commune, who alone are charged with securing the free and just exercise of the right of meeting and publicity. The organisation of urban defence and of the National Guard, which elects its chiefs, and alone watches over the maintenance of order in the city, is also demanded. Paris wishes nothing more under the head of local guarantees, on the well-understood condition of regaining, in a grand central administration and delegation from the Federal Communes, the realisation and practice of those principles; but, in favour of her autonomy, and profiting by her liberty of action, she reserves to herself to bring about, as may seem good to her, administrative and economic reforms which the people demand, and to create such institutions as may serve to develop and further education. Produce, exchange, and credit have to universalise power and property according to the necessities of the moment, the wishes of those interested, and the data furnished by experience.

"Our enemies deceive themselves, or deceive the country, when they accuse Paris of desiring to impose its will and supremacy upon the rest of the nation, and to aspire to a dictatorship which would be a veritable attempt to overthrow the independence and sovereignty



FALL OF THE VENDÔME COLUMN.

of other Communes. They deceive themselves when they accuse Paris of seeking the destruction of French unity established by the revolution. The unity which has been imposed upon us up to the present, by the Empire, the Monarchy, and Parliamentary Government, is nothing but centralisation, despotic, unintelligent, arbitrary, and onerous. The political unity, as desired by Paris, is a voluntary association of all local initiatives, the free and spontaneous co-operation of all individual energies with the common object of the well-being, liberty, and security of all. The Communal revolution initiated by the people on the 18th of March inaugurated a new era in politics—experimental, positive, and scientific. It was the end of the old governmental and clerical world, of military supremacy, of bureaucracy, and jobbing in monopolies and privileges, to which the proletariat owed its slavery, and the country its misfortunes and disasters. The strife between Paris and Versailles is one of those that cannot be ended by an illusory compromise; the issue should not be doubtful. The victory fought for with such indomitable energy by the Commune will remain with the idea and with the right. We appeal to France, which knows that Paris in arms possesses as much calm as bravery. Paris is only in arms in consequence of her devotion to liberty, and the glory of all in France ought to cause this bloody conflict to cease.

"It is for France to disarm Versailles by a solemn manifestation of her irresistible will. Summoned to profit by our conquests, she should declare herself identified with our efforts; she should be our ally in the contest, which can only end by the triumph of the Communal idea, or the ruin of Paris. As for ourselves, citizens of Paris, we have a mission to accomplish—a modern revolution—the greatest and the most fruitful of all those which have illuminated history. It is our duty to fight and conquer."

Whatever was good in this programme—and there was much that was good in it—could have been attained by peaceful agitation. But the Commune began with threats, and ended in civil convulsion. In this very manifestation it was distinctly avowed that the struggle could only end "by the triumph of the Communal idea, *or the ruin of Paris*"—a prophecy which was certainly realised in its second alternative. The Commune therefore sought to dictate to France by the menace of dire calamities; and it added to its legitimate demands a number of others which no nation could grant, and retain its unity, its grandeur, or even its independence.

Some degree of reform became necessary in the Communal Constitution as time revealed its imperfections. On the 20th of April, the appointments to the different Ministries, and the degree of power which each Minister ought to wield, were made the subjects of a long discussion. It was at length decided that the Executive Commission should be reconstituted as follows:—Cluseret, War; Jourde, Finance; Viard, Subsistence; Paschal Grousset, Foreign Affairs; Franckel, Labour and Exchange; Protot, Justice; Andrien, Public Works; Vaillant, Education; Raoul Rigault, Public Safety. The Ministry thus constituted was to hold power under conditions which were thus stated:—

"1. The Executive Power is, and remains, confided provisionally to one Delegate from each of the nine Commissions amongst which the Commune has divided the work of administration.

"2. The Delegates will be named by the Commune by a majority of votes.

"3. The Delegates will meet each day, and take by majority the decisions relative to each of their departments.

"4. Each day they will render an account to the Commune in Secret Committee of the measures decreed or executed by them; and the Commune will ratify those measures."

At the same time, the *Affranchi*, a paper edited by Paschal Grousset, Minister for Foreign Affairs, announced that, thanks to the skill of the Committee of Finance, the monetary situation of the Commune was most satisfactory. The same paper added:—"The Financial Committee declares that it is able to pay one milliard, if necessary, as the share of Paris to the Prussian indemnity, and to spread that sum over ten years, and still be able to diminish the *octroi* duty. These are proceedings to which neither the Empire nor the 4th of September have habituated us." A correspondent of the *Daily News* observed that the last sentence might well be accepted, for that neither the Empire nor the Government of the 4th of September had attempted to replenish the treasury by wholesale confiscation.

Such was the posture of affairs in the second half of April. It proved that the Commune possessed greater strength and vitality than was at first imagined; but it also showed that the situation was desperate, and could only be maintained by desperate means. The members of the Commune were continually quarrelling among themselves; arrests and resignations were frequent; and it was evident that there was no greater adhesion among the component parts of the body than was rendered absolutely necessary by the common danger. Yet this was the power which set to itself the task of regenerating France! These were the men who talked of inaugurating the rule of fraternity, when their ideas were founded on a negation of the rights of others, and their practice was a compound of terror and actual violence!

CHAPTER XXXI.

Renewal of Fighting after the Truce of April 25th—Bombardment of the Southern Forts on the 26th and 27th—The Fire of Fort Issy extinguished—Capture by the Versaillese of the Village of Moulineaux—Speech of M. Thiers to the Assembly—The Question of Clemency—Blockade of Paris—Explanations of Prince Bismarck to the German Parliament—Circular of M. Dufaure on Press Prosecutions—Remarks of M. Louis Blanc on the Circular, and Reply of M. Dufaure—Treatment of the Press by both Sides—Divisions in the Commune—The Central Committee of the National Guard—Resignation of Félix Pyat—Appointment of a Committee of Public Safety—Arrest of Cluseret—Resignation of Raoul Rigault—Juries of Accusation—The Freemasons and the Commune—Renewed Attempts at Conciliation—Decree for the Destruction of the Bréa Church—An Assassin rewarded—New Commands in the Communal Army—Causes of the Inferiority of the Communal Troops—Socrates on Amateur Soldiering—Spirited Attempt to recover the Bridge of Asnières—Devices of the Communists—Havoc caused by the Shells—Disasters at Fort Issy—The Political Prisoners at Mazas.

WHEN the truce of April 25th terminated, at five o'clock in the evening, hostilities at once recommenced. The Versailles outposts were now at 150 yards' distance from the Paris side of the church at Neuilly. Some cannonading took place in the direction of Forts Vanvres and Issy; but very little was done. M. Thiers, however, announced the next day that three great lines of batteries had opened fire on the forts in possession of the insurgents; that, towards night, some men had been wounded, and some portion of the embrasures damaged, without, however, the firing being interrupted; that in the centre, which contained seventeen guns of great calibre, no men had been wounded, nor had any of the pieces been injured; and that to the left the action was less violent than in other parts. The fighting at Neuilly became rather sharp during the night, and it was continued on the morning of the 26th, but still without leading to any positive result. Asnières was also once more the scene of conflict, the Versailles troops attempting to cross the bridge, but being unable to succeed, owing to the severity of the fire. The Communal authorities announced that they had gained great successes on the western side of Paris, that they had dismounted some batteries of the Versaillese, and that a barricade had been taken, with little loss to the Federalists. Whatever measure of truth there might be in these alleged facts, it appears certain that the Government troops continued to advance during the 26th, that the Paris forces lost some barricades, and that they suffered severely, and were obliged to leave several of their wounded in the hands of the enemy. The redoubt at Moulin de Pierre continued to cannonade what remained of the barracks at Fort Issy, from which, however, shells were fired in reply. Heavy fighting occurred along the whole line on the night of the 26th, and the bombardment of the southern forts recommenced with great fury at one A.M. on the morning of the 27th. Vanvres, Issy, and Montrouge were visited by a fiery tempest of shells, and a despatch from Vanvres said that several casemates had been injured. The writer added:—"We are ready for everything. If necessary, we will blow up all the southern forts, rather than that they should fall into the hands of the Royalists. We hope, however, not to be forced to take such a step." The report from Issy at mid-day was to the effect that the fort had been bombarded with extraordinary violence, and that the 9th Battalion had suffered greatly, several men and a *vivandière* being killed. The commander of Montrouge also confessed to damage; and in the course of the day the fire of Fort Issy was extinguished by the Versailles batteries. The barracks at that fort were now entirely destroyed; a large breach appeared in the walls; and Les Moulineaux, a village close by, was taken by the Versaillese. On the other hand, the insurgents had some successes. Two of their gunboats on the Seine were enabled, by a sudden rise in the river, to advance to the bridge at the Point du Jour, where their fire did some damage; and an armour-clad locomotive got as far as Asnières, and vigorously shelled the Château de Becon the whole morning.

The general result, however, was decidedly in favour of the Government, and M. Thiers found himself in a position to address the Assembly, in the course of the 27th, very confidently and hopefully. He said he did not consider that the part of a purveyor of news befitted a Government, but that under existing circumstances he thought it right to enlighten the country with respect to the state of affairs. The first task which the Government had set itself was the organisation of the military forces, and not a moment had been lost. "We have now," said M. Thiers, "a great and powerful army, fully possessed of the sentiment of duty, and strong through the selection which has been made of its leaders. We addressed ourselves to no party, but to all honest and patriotic men; to men who, had they been better commanded in the late war, would have led France to victory. We have sum-

moned to the chief command an illustrious warrior —one whom we may call the Cavalier without fear and without reproach. The army will do its duty, and through it law and order will triumph." The measures proposed by the Commander-in-Chief (MacMahon) were completed, but had not been determined on without deep reflection. The operations for the investment of Paris had occupied the first days of the civil war; but the investment was accomplished, and active operations had commenced. The artillery of the Government troops, though competing with guns of formidable calibre, had silenced the fire of Fort Issy, and the position of Moulineaux had been carried. M. Thiers said he would characterise as happy successes the results which assured, not victory—a most inappropriate word—but the speedy end of the civil war. This consummation, however, would not be achieved without losses for the army, as well as for the "perverse and misguided" insurgents. M. Thiers, in saying this, was much affected. He continued:—"We are not the authors of this conflict, nor are we the assailants; we are defending the cause of public law and public order. They speak to us of conciliation: we, too, wish for conciliation; personally I would make every sacrifice to attain it. We are endeavouring to save liberty from a despotism without a sanction, the issue of unbridled licence. The Assembly has no afterthought against the Republic. The National Assembly has respected facts as it found them, and is making no effort, is engaged in no plot, against the Republic. It is solely prosecuting its mission of reorganising the country. With regard to the necessity for the display of clemency, I repeat that our rigour will vanish when the insurgents lay down their arms, excepting against those persons who have been guilty of crime, and they are not numerous. When I give orders, not cruel ones, but orders such as would be dictated by a state of war, I feel under the necessity of asking you whether right is on my side." M. Thiers was here interrupted by various exclamations, but he appealed to the Assembly to listen to him, and then continued:—"I give these orders with sorrow; but was there ever a time when right was more evident than at present? Every one knows the truth of what I say. In Paris, the abstentions from voting at the recent elections show the isolation of the insurgents, whilst, on the other hand, the whole of France is with us and with you, who are the free expression of her suffrages." In pursuing his remarks, M. Thiers said that the Assembly was more liberal than he was himself. He condemned the ideas of the Commune, which would destroy the unity of France; and he concluded by declaring that the task of the Government and the Assembly was to reconcile unity with freedom.

Another measure of the Versailles Government, which was adopted towards the end of April, contributed greatly to the desperate situation of Paris, and ensured the ultimate defeat of the rebels. This was the institution of a regular blockade, by which all stocks of food were intercepted on their way to the capital. The Prussians consented to stop the supplies on their side of Paris, and the city was thus once more threatened with the horrors of famine. The position of Prussia towards France was made the subject, on the 24th of April, of some explanations given by Prince Bismarck to the German Parliament. The Imperial Chancellor stated that, even if the French Government should pay the first half-milliard of the indemnity at once, the evacuation of the forts, according to the terms of the treaty, would only ensue after the formal conclusion of peace. "On the outbreak of the movement in Paris," continued Prince Bismarck, "Germany did not raise any objections to some slight deviations from the preliminaries on the part of the Versailles Government. Germany has thereby been forced into great financial sacrifices, and the maintenance of considerable troops in France, being compelled to hold herself at least sufficiently strong to be prepared for all eventualities. If the French Government does not pay the amount agreed upon for the maintenance of the German troops, it will be necessary again to have recourse to requisitions of food and forage." These explanations probably gave satisfaction to the Germans, but they were of course not very pleasing to either belligerent in France. Both Versailles and Paris wanted to get Germany for an ally.

While the struggle was going on, the Government of M. Thiers found it necessary to take some steps to protect itself against the tactics of those who would fain have overthrown it. On the 23rd of April, M. Dufaure, the Minister of Justice, addressed a circular to the Procurators-General with reference to a law which had just been passed, subjecting press offences to trial by jury. In this circular, the Minister protested against the conduct of those writers who, after having for a long time demanded universal suffrage, were then constantly insulting the National Assembly, although that body, according to M. Dufaure, incontestably presented the most free and certain realisation of that principle. These writers, he said, were the most effective and shameless apologists of the dictatorship of strangers and common convicts, whom they placed upon the same footing with an Assembly which had issued

from the nation. The Commune of Paris, argued M. Dufaure, had, by its hypocritical language, uttered under the pretence of seeking conciliation, weakened the public sentiment of justice, and accustomed the country to view in an equal light lawfully-established order and insurrection—the power created by the whole of France, and the dictatorship which had imposed itself on the capital by a crime, and which continued to reign by virtue of the terror it inspired. The writers to whom the Minister was alluding were described by him as being the enemies not merely of a particular Government, but of human society in general; and he added, addressing the Procurators-General, "You must not hesitate to prosecute them. We have for months been the saddened witnesses of the evils of a foreign war. In the civil war which guilty persons seek to instigate in France, our duty must be one of the greatest activity." This circular gave considerable offence to the more extreme members of the Republican party in the Assembly. In the sitting of April 26th, M. Louis Blanc questioned M. Dufaure on the subject, and expressed his astonishment that the Procurators should be instructed to prosecute as criminal even a suggestion of conciliation in moderate language. Many Municipal Councils had urged conciliation. M. Dufaure's policy might be that of a Procurator, but it was not that of a statesman. Force, observed M. Blanc, must reside with the law; but moderation constituted the dignity of force, and was the proof of its existence. M. Dufaure replied:—"Every epoch has its dangers, and public writers of all periods commit errors which may be carried so far as to become crimes. Some attack the institutions of society openly and without reserve; others, more dangerous still, impart to their criticism a semblance of conciliation." Quoting a passage from his circular, in which he spoke of the hypocritical language of the Commune on the subject of conciliation, M. Dufaure remarked:—"I was led to write that by reading several manifestoes which appeared to be dictated by the watchword of apparent conciliation, published in different parts of the provinces, and representing the Assembly and the Government as deaf to all proposals of conciliation." M. Dufaure then read several documents in support of his views, and said the Assembly might judge for itself whether he had gone too far in what he had said in his circular. "Let Paris," added the Minister, "return to a condition of law and order, and then the administrators of justice will know how to bring to the exercise of their duty a spirit compatible with such desirable circumstances." To a further question of M. Louis Blanc's, M. Dufaure replied that he never intended to send before the tribunals persons who, without any factious motives, spoke of conciliation.

The measures suggested by M. Dufaure were doubtless necessary; but, after the excessive opposition offered by the party now in power to the press legislation of the Imperial Government, they came with an ill grace from those who had to propose and defend them. In this respect, however, all parties in France are alike. The Republicans of every shade condemned the Empire for interfering with the liberty of the press; but now the Moderate Republicans were stifling the utterances of the Ultra Republicans all over the country, and the Ultra Republicans in Paris were denying their opponents the right to say a word against the sacred cause of Atheism and Socialism. The defence offered by M. Vésinier, in his "History of the Commune," for the restraints placed on the independent press of the capital, is curious, as showing how every French party is in turn obliged to resort to the very same acts it has furiously condemned, and even continues to condemn, in its adversaries. The official Secretary and Editor says:—

"The Commune was forced to take severe measures against the press. All the reactionary journals of the capital had not only openly attacked the Central Committee and the Commune, their members and their acts, in a most unworthy manner, with lies, gross calumnies, injuries, and defamation; but they had publicly preached revolt and civil war against them. It was therefore the duty of the Commune and the Central Committee to take the most energetic measures for defending themselves against this venal and criminal press, which was in the pay of the enemy, and a real danger to Paris in its critical situation.

"All Europe knows well enough the unworthy part which a portion of the French press has played for twenty-two years. It has been a scandal and a disgrace to France. The Commune had not only the right and the power, but it was also its duty, to suppress it; and it did well to put an end to the culpable excesses of that *venal*, *degraded*, and *villainous press*, which for twenty years had only existed by the toleration of the police, as a regular branch-office of the Rue de Jérusalem.

"By the suppression of all these immoral organs, defenders of the Versailles Government, the Commune, at war with the latter, did no more than defend itself by using the right of legitimate reprisals. It could not reasonably be expected that it would permit the enemy to have his organs, defenders, and devoted partisans, who were nothing more nor less than spies, in the very heart of Paris, which was being besieged by the Versaillists. By this act it only made a just use of reciprocity. The Versailles Government not only did not allow the publication of any journal favourable to the Commune, but seized all the socialist Republican



A SHARP SKIRMISH IN THE OUTSKIRTS.

journals issuing from Paris. The following is the verbatim decree on this subject by M. Picard :—'I order the seizure of all the Paris journals, and their circulation is interdicted.' Every one was seized; even friendly papers were not excepted. But the Government of the National Defence had already, previously to the war, suppressed six popular journals."*

The plain truth and bare common-sense of the whole matter is, that any Government mortally attacked—not simply criticised, but treated with the open and avowed design of revolution—must defend itself as an individual does when surprised by the assaults of a murderer. It must either suppress or be suppressed. The sword has been appealed to, and by the sword must the answer be given. Demagogues always deny this principle when they are in opposition, but they always practise it when they are in power. While they are engaged in the work of overthrowing the existing state of things, they assert for themselves the most unbounded license, and condemn, as an abominable interference with personal freedom, any action of the Government in repression of even direct incentives to revolt and assassination. But as soon as they become a Government, they discover that nothing can be more shocking or worthy of punishment than to write with bitterness against authority. The Commune in this respect acted in exactly the same way as the Empire; but it had not the same justification, for, instead of representing the nation, it represented scarcely any one but its own members. It was even divided into two factions, and, had its life been prolonged, it is not improbable that it would have split into two camps. The Paris papers of April 24th contained the following announcement :—"Some journals have stated that the Central Committee of the



RECEPTION OF THE CONQUERORS AT BERLIN.

* Translation by J. V. Weber. The italics in the second paragraph of this quotation are the author's or translator's own.

National Guard, having fulfilled its mission, has been dissolved. This news is completely false. The Committee, as well as the National Guard from which it emanates, cannot disappear; but its liberty disappears. The arrondissements which are not completely represented in the Central Committee by three members are invited to send their representatives with as little delay as possible, with proper certificates of their election." The meaning of this rather obscure piece of writing was that the Central Committee of the National Guard, which had in fact made the Commune, was greatly dissatisfied with the governing Council, and that it was determined to hold itself in readiness to act on its own responsibility, if occasion arose. It was even said that the Committee was anxious to treat with Versailles, and to come to terms before it was too late. The end was seen very clearly approaching, and the Fathers of the Commune began to fall away from the cause.

The resignation of Félix Pyat, which occurred about the time when this announcement was put forth, was a significant fact. Pyat relinquished his seat in the Communal Council on the ground that he could not approve of the decision to accept as valid the election of members who had obtained only a relative majority of votes—that is to say, a number less than the stipulated eighth of the whole constituency. The Commune had committed the same violation of its word at the period of the first elections; but Pyat had then shut his eyes to the breach of faith. On its occurring a second time, however, he declared that he could no longer continue a member of the governing body. For a time he talked of withdrawing his resignation; but he was soon after appointed, together with Citizens Antoine Arnauld, Leo Meillet, Ranvier, and Charles Gérardin, to a body which was in fact created to overlook, and in a great measure to supersede, the Executive Commission. This new body was called, after one of a similar character in the first French Revolution, the Committee of Public Safety. Its members were invested with the most extended powers over all the Commissions, and it was declared that they should be responsible only to the Commune.

The members of the Central Committee of the National Guard took a special dislike to Cluseret, whom they accused of being a Buonapartist in disguise. They threatened to arrest him; but for a little while longer he retained his position. The assertion that Cluseret was acting on behalf of the Imperialists and the Prussians was to some extent confirmed by Admiral Saisset before the Committee for investigating the facts of the Communistical rising, appointed after the suppression of the revolt. "The Prussians," said the Admiral, "were mixed up in the insurrection. Veynet [an agent of the Government at Versailles] was in the habit of visiting Cluseret, and made his overtures quite openly. 'If you will facilitate the opening of Paris to the Versailles troops,' he said, 'you shall have any sum you may ask.' Cluseret replied, 'I am too well paid by Bismarck and the others to be bought by you. It is quite useless; you will never succeed.'" M. Jules Favre, however, declared before the same Committee that no circumstances whatever led him to accuse either Buonapartist or Prussian agents as the instigators of the insurrection.

Cluseret was a good deal annoyed by the proceedings of a Military Court appointed, in the latter part of April, to judge all acts which might seem to endanger the public safety. According to Colonel Rossel, this Court had been created at the pressing instance of Cluseret himself; but at any rate he appears to have quarrelled with it very soon. Rossel was the President, and he resolved to act with rigour against all who shirked their military duties; in doing which he condemned some persons who were among the most extreme of the revolutionary party. This seems to have excited the jealousy and fears of the Commune, and it was determined to pull down what had been so recently set up. The first act of the Court was to condemn the chief of a battalion to be shot because he refused to march his men to the front until they had been fed, as they had been without food for eighteen hours. In short, the Court made itself so unpopular that its judgments were quashed. Cluseret, at the sitting of the Commune on the 24th of April, asked if any attention had been paid to the proceedings of the Military Court. He was told that, instead of asking questions, he was required to answer some; and it was then demanded of him why the Communal Guards at the ramparts were without shoes and cloaks, and had for fifteen days been fed on nothing but salt meat. A fierce and noisy discussion ensued, but in the end the Military Court was dissolved. At the close of the sitting, Citizen Theisz asked if the Commune had been perfectly informed as to the fitness of all its members to take part in its councils—a very delicate question, calculated to arouse a good deal of anger and suspicion. Citizen Protot replied that a commission had been named by him to examine the title of each member; but it appeared that this commission consisted of only one individual, and therefore had not prepared a report. Cluseret was evidently on the downward slope of his power; and on Sun-

day, the 30th of April, he was arrested on a charge of "mismanagement" along the line of the forts. In other words, he had failed, and was accordingly only fit to be disgraced. Dombrowski and another of the military chiefs had tendered their resignations, in disapproval of the conduct of Cluseret, but had consented to withdraw them on condition that he should be arrested. The immediate occasion of the War Minister's downfall was the temporary occupation of Fort Issy by the Versaillese—a disaster which it was thought Cluseret might have prevented.

Another member of the Commune had a difference with his colleagues about the same time. This was Raoul Rigault, the Minister of Public Safety. The Commune, thinking that his powers were too great and undivided, passed an order empowering any of its members to visit the prisoners. Rigault declared that it was impossible for him or any one else to accept the duties of the Ministry on such conditions. He therefore resigned, and was replaced by Cournet. Riel, his chief assistant, was arrested almost immediately afterwards; but Rigault himself was speedily appointed Public Prosecutor.

The Commune continued to make provision for the assertion of its power against all who might question it. On the 22nd of April, a decree, proposed by Citizen Protot, the Delegate of Justice, for the institution of a jury of accusation, was adopted. The principal provisions of this decree (according to M. Vésinier) were that the jury should be chosen from the delegates of the National Guard; that it should consist of four sections, each comprising twelve jurymen chosen by lot at a public sitting convened for the purpose by the Commune; that the accused and the prosecutor should alone have the right of exemption; that the accused should have the right of summoning his witnesses at the cost of the State; that the sittings should be public; that the accused should be freely allowed to choose his own advocate, even though the latter should not belong to the corporation of advocates; that he might propose any exception that might appear to him beneficial to his defence; and that he should not be pronounced guilty unless there were a majority of eight out of twelve votes. Notwithstanding a certain studied pretence of fairness towards the accused in these enactments, it is easy to see that a person falling under the ban of the Commune would have little to hope from such a tribunal. A jury chosen from delegates of the National Guard would be tolerably certain to find two-thirds of its number, if not more, in favour of a conviction.

A strange attempt at conciliation, if such it can be called, was made on the 26th. Delegates from the Freemasons sought an interview with the governing body of the Commune, and declared themselves willing to plant their banners of peace on the ramparts, to march towards the army of Versailles, and to adjure their brethren in the ranks to put an end to so fratricidal a war. If the Government troops should reply to this by firing on the flags of peace, all the Freemasons of Paris, even including the old men, would enlist in the National Guard, and march against the common foe. Accordingly, a large number of Freemasons, in the costume of their order, and carrying their banners, followed by nearly all the members of the Commune, and, it is said, by 40,000 or 50,000 citizens, walked in procession to the Arch of Triumph. On reaching that point, they were assailed, says M. Vésinier, by a shower of bombs and shells from the Versaillese; but it would seem from another account that just before their arrival Porte Maillot had fired on the Government troops, to which Mont Valérien not unnaturally replied. Some of the Freemasons were wounded; but on a white flag, bearing the words "Love one another," being displayed, the fire of the Versailles army—on the admission of M. Vésinier himself—was suspended. About forty delegates from the Freemasons then advanced to the Courbevoie barricade. General Leclerc received them in front of the bridge, and conducted them to General Montaudon, the superior commander of the division occupying Courbevoie. This officer, himself a Freemason, received them courteously, and proposed that three of their number should be sent as a deputation to M. Thiers. The Chief of the Executive Power, on the delegates being introduced to him, gave them the same answer that he had previously made to other intermediaries. No one, he said, desired more than he the conclusion of the civil war; but France could not yield to insurgents. The Freemasons should address themselves to the Commune in order to restore peace, for it was by the Commune that peace had been broken. The deputation then returned to Paris, and the Freemasons resolved that their banners should remain hoisted on the ramparts, and that members of the fraternity should take it in turns to guard them. This arrangement, however, did not last many days; and it would seem that the action of the delegates was not sanctioned or approved by the main body of Freemasons.

On the 27th of April, the Commune adopted a decree which may be ranked with that for the destruction of the Napoleon Column. In the

horrible Socialist insurrection of June, 1848, a general of the name of Bréa distinguished himself on the side of the Government, but was denounced by the insurgents as an "assassin," and was himself assassinated by an adherent of the Red Republic. A church was afterwards erected to the memory of this general, and the Commune now determined to pull down the church, as "a standing insult to the vanquished of June, who fell while defending the cause of the people." It was also resolved to call the place where it stood "the Place de Juin." But this was not all. "Citizen Vésinier," as the said citizen reports of himself in his work on the Commune, "considering it only just to take cognisance of the victim as well as the executioner," proposed two additional articles to the decree: one granting amnesty to "citizen Nourry," who for two-and-twenty years had been a prisoner at Cayenne for the "execution" of "the traitor Bréa," and setting Nourry at liberty; the other granting to his mother, who had so long "bewailed her innocent son," the same pension as that enjoyed by widows of National Guards killed in battle. These acts were further proofs of the determination of the Commune to place private assassination on the same footing as public justice. The innocent and worthy Nourry had taken the law into his own hands. Without any of the forms of justice—without any of the checks on arbitrary oppression which are provided by the procedure of regular tribunals—this man had chosen to kill General Bréa because he disliked the principles he represented, or the acts he had committed. By the same rule—if any private individual is to be his own judge, jury, counsel, witness, and executioner, and to be at liberty to put another to death because he thinks him a curse to society—General Bréa would have been quite justified at any moment in shooting a Red Republican, merely because he regarded his views as pernicious. But the Communists, of course, would not have admitted this. Assassination is a noble principle, but only when set in motion by Red Republicans against Moderate Republicans, Imperialists, and adherents of the old Monarchy.

Scarcely a day passed without some fresh edict. On the 29th of April a decree was issued dividing the National (or, to speak more correctly, Communal) Guards into two armies: one commanded by Dombrowski, and having charge of Paris from the Point du Jour towards the north; the other directed by Wroblewski (another Pole), and destined for operating in the southern parts of Paris, from the Point du Jour to Bercy. The latter appointment set aside Citizen Eudes, who had previously commanded in the south. Moreover, the making of such appointments by the Commune was a practical denial of the right of the National Guards to choose their own officers, which was one of the principal grounds of quarrel with the Government of M. Thiers. The position of the Commune, however, was desperate; and it was obliged to eat its own words, to belie its own principles, and to do whatever offered the smallest chance of victory, or even of prolonged resistance. There were now a good many Poles in command. Another was a person named Okolowicz (who was shortly afterwards wounded, and obliged to retire); and there were also some foreigners among the rank and file. The Poles have always been popular in revolutionary Paris; yet some jealousy was felt at so many receiving important commands. They seem, however, to have been really the best men at the disposal of the Red Republic; for the dearth of military genius among the heroes of the barricades was remarkable. M. Vésinier himself admits the inferiority of the Communal troops to those of Versailles. "The army of the Commune," he remarks, "was to a great extent composed of married men with families; and we need not, therefore, wonder that it was deficient in the practice, the stability under fire, and especially the discipline, of the regular army. Its officers had neither the military knowledge which study alone can give, nor the habit of command or experience, only to be acquired by long practice. There was no cavalry, and the artillery was very inferior in comparison with that of the enemy. The artillerymen, being National Guards, were but insufficiently instructed. The conductors of the teams did not understand how to manœuvre, and the horses, sadly deficient in number, had never been under fire. Such were the principal causes of the inferiority of the army of the Commune." M. Vésinier also remarks that the ammunition and victualling departments were badly arranged; that, imperfect as was the administration during the siege, it was even worse after the 18th of March; and that, for meeting the "disciplined troops, old and experienced generals, and skilled officers of Versailles," the Commune had only a raw army, led by young generals inexperienced in warfare, whose audacity, courage, and genius had to stand in place of study, art, and practice. Colonel Rossel, for some time Minister of War under the Commune, gives a still worse account of the Communal Guards, and describes them as ragamuffins, drunkards, and scamps, "who pretended to deliver the country from the rule of the sword, and could only substitute for it the rule of *delirium tremens*."† A due consideration of

† Rossel's Posthumous Papers. English Translation, 1872.

these facts, previous to the outbreak of the civil war, should have deterred the Communists from making the attempt, and probably would have done so, but for their overweening confidence in battle-cries and declamation. They should have borne in mind (if, indeed, they had any knowledge of it) the advice on this very subject given by the great idealist of the perfect State—by Plato in his treatise on "The Republic." Socrates is supposed to be repeating a conversation he had had with Glaucon :—

"'We agreed, if you remember,' said I, 'that it was impossible for a single person to practise many arts well.' 'True,' said he. 'What, then,' said I, 'do not struggles in war seem to require art?' 'Very much so,' said he. 'Ought we, then, to take more care of the shoemaking art than of that of warfare?' 'By no means.' 'But we charged the shoemaker not to attempt to be at the same time a husbandman, or a weaver, or a builder, in order that the work of shoemaking might be well done; and in like manner we allotted to each of the others a single calling, to which each was adapted by nature, and at which each, by abstaining from the rest, and applying to it the whole of his life, and not neglecting the proper opportunities, would be likely to work well. But is it not of the greatest importance that what concerns war should be well performed? Or is it so easy that one who is a husbandman may also be a soldier, and a shoemaker, and one who practises any other art; while no one could become a skilful chess or dice-player who did not study it from childhood, but made it a mere bye-work? And can a person who takes a spear, or other warlike arms and instruments, instantly become an expert combatant in an armed encounter, or aught else relating to war; while, as respects the tools of any other art whatever, one cannot become a good artist, or even a wrestler to any useful extent, without having correct knowledge, and bestowing sufficient attention?' 'In that case, such tools,' said he, 'would truly be very valuable.' 'Therefore,' said I, 'by how much more important is the work of the State-guardians, by so much will it require the greater leisure from other pursuits, and likewise the greater art and study.' 'I really think so,' replied he."*

The truth of this reasoning has certainly lost nothing in force and cogency since the days of Socrates and Plato.

A very spirited attempt was made by the Communists, on the 28th, to recover the bridge of Asnières. They dashed at it with a great deal of resolution, and were supported by some heavy pieces on the ramparts, and by the armour-plated locomotive engines. The Versailles troops, not anticipating such an attack, fell back from their first barricade, after a sharp and sanguinary struggle. They then took up a position behind the ruins of the railway station, and awaited, with some confidence, any fresh assault which the enemy might determine on making. Flushed with success, the Federalists again advanced, and, in spite of a heavy fire, made considerable progress. In aid of this movement, four hundred men were thrown across the Seine in boats, and General Okolowicz, placing himself at the head of the new contingent, encouraged his soldiers with word and action. But after a while the Government troops received reinforcements; a new battery, established between Courbevoie and Charleburg, opened fire, and the National Guards found it necessary to retreat. Desultory fighting still continued about Neuilly, and Dombrowski gave orders to the inhabitants to leave without delay, as it was his intention to "reduce the village to powder." The bombardment by the Versaillese was still terrible; and one night a great fire broke out at the Ternes. It was affirmed, however, by a Paris correspondent of the *Times* that this fire was caused by the agency of petroleum shells launched by the Federals themselves from their outposts at Neuilly, in order to keep up the indignation of the populace. The story is almost incredible; but it receives a certain amount of collateral support from another statement put forward at the same time by the Paris correspondent of the *Guardian* newspaper, who said he made it on the authority of a person who came out of Paris towards the close of April. This was to the effect that the battery erected on the Trocadero, the avowed object of which was to breach or silence Mont Valérien, was really placed there in order to draw the enemy's fire on the quarter occupied by the National Guards of Passy, who had refused to act with the Commune. The device succeeding, the Federalists had the further satisfaction of being able to announce, with many exclamations of horror, that the barbarians of Versailles were bombarding peaceful and inoffensive Paris. The officers of the National Guards of Passy (continued the same account) sent a delegation to the commandant of Mont Valérien, explaining to him the true state of the case; to which he replied that, as the stupid battery of the Trocadero did him no harm, he should cease, or nearly so, to return its fire.

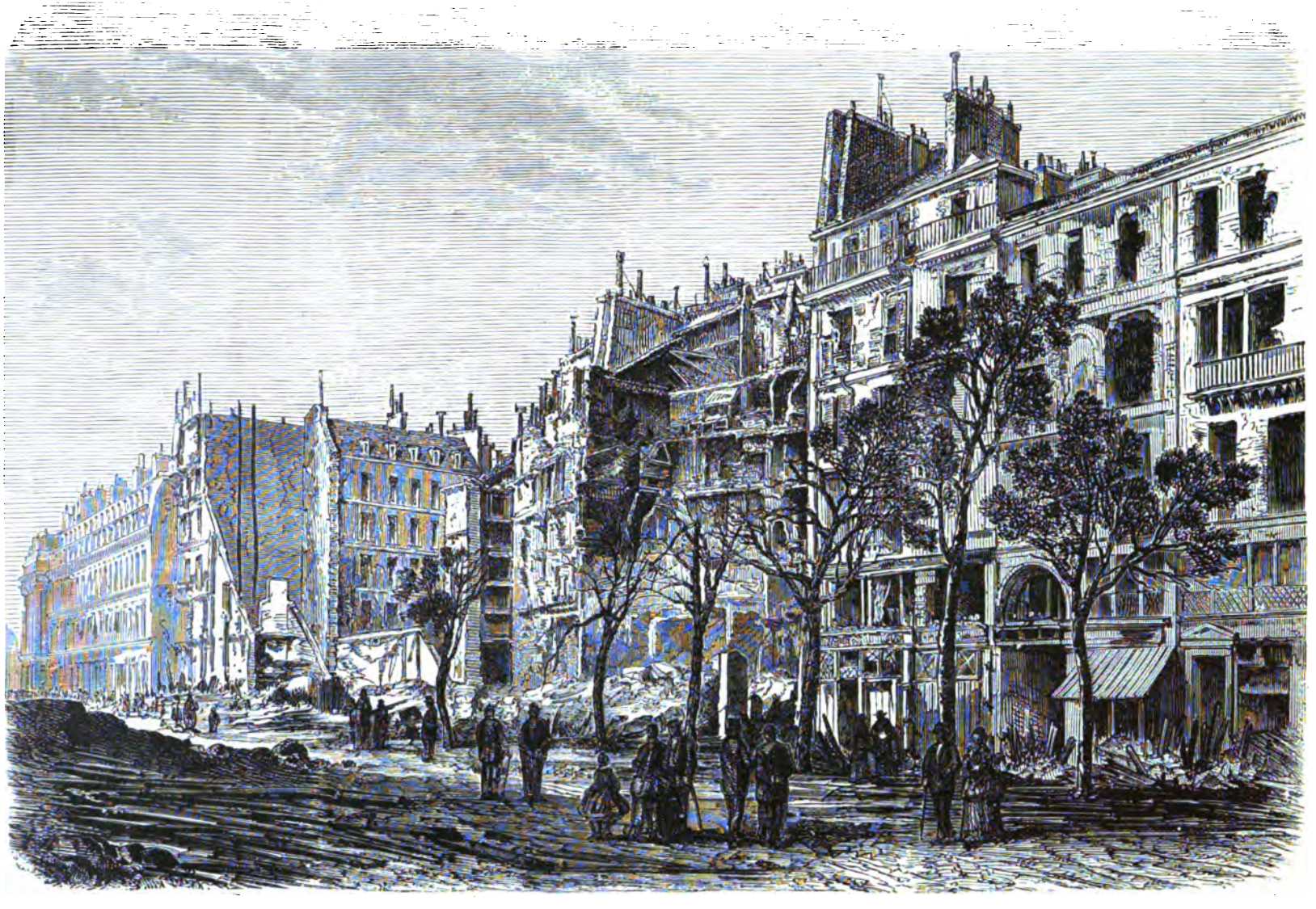
The shells hurled by the belligerents at one another, oftentimes worked terrible havoc in intermediate places. One evening, a shell flew into a room in the hospital of St. Cloud. The building was nearly destroyed when the Germans set fire to the place on the 26th of January; but two rooms had been cleared of rubbish, and, with the aid of rafters and canvas, had been converted into a temporary refuge for the sick. On the occasion

* The Republic of Plato, Book II., chapters 14, 15. Translation by Henry Davis, M.A.

referred to, the shell severely bruised a Sister of Mercy, tore off the legs of another, and so injured a child they were nursing that it died. In Paris itself, the Avenue de la Grande Armée suffered much from the bombardment; and an English family living near the Arch of Triumph invited a friend to come and "play at hide-and-seek" with the shells. The game consisted of watching for a shell from a good place of observation in the balcony, and then making a rush for the kitchen, as the only place of safety, should the house be struck. The excitement of this strange sport was occasionally increased by waiting until the shell had made some progress in the direction of the house, and the whistling of its passage through the air could be distinctly heard.

Fort Issy was so damaged by the fire of the Versailles artillery that, on the evening of Sunday, the 30th of April (on the morning of which day the Versaillese took the farm of Bonany, before Châtillon), a *parlementaire* was sent to demand its surrender. The insurgents offered to capitulate, on condition of being allowed to march out. General Cissy, suspecting treachery, demanded guarantees that the fort should not be blown up when the troops entered, and required some insurgents as hostages. This was refused, and firing recommenced. Earlier in the day, there had been a great panic in the fort. The gunners declined to obey the orders of the commandant; they declared that they could no longer hold out, and, after spiking half the guns, left the place in a body. The commandant thereupon returned to Paris, and surrendered himself a prisoner into the hands of the Central Committee, that the whole affair might be investigated. The fort was actually empty for a time, and the Versaillese, had they known the fact, might have marched in unopposed. Cluseret, however, sent fresh troops to occupy the fort, on finding that he could not disabuse the minds of the original garrison of their feeling of alarm. It would seem that on the following morning (May 1st) the fort was again abandoned, and held for a few hours by the Government troops; that the Communal Guards subsequently retook the work, at a great cost of life, and also the trenches which the Versaillese had occupied at a distance from the walls; and that towards midnight three battalions of the Government forces again seized the Château of Issy (not the fort), though only after a very determined resistance. Such appears to be the most consistent account of the events at Issy; but the various narratives are so confused and contradictory, that it is impossible to be certain as to the exact course of affairs.

Though thus threatened in their main strongholds, the men of the Commune continued to hold their prisoners with a firm grip. The special correspondent of the *Times* in Paris wrote an account of a visit he had paid to the persons arrested and detained as hostages at Mazas. The authorities made no objection to his visit, but seemed, on the contrary, pleased that a foreign journalist should be in a position to give the English public an unprejudiced account of what he had himself seen. The visit was unexpected, and the correspondent saw the Archbishop of Paris (Monseigneur Darboy), M. Bonjean (President of the Court of Cassation), M. Deguerry (Curé of the Madeleine), and the ex-Almoner of La Roquette. The representative of the English journal reported that in many respects no distinction was made between the treatment of these gentlemen and that of common felons. All had the same narrow cells, the same beds, and the same rough furniture, consisting of a single chair and a small deal table; and all were subjected to the same ceaseless overlooking. The warders watched them at all hours of the day through spy-holes made in the doors of the cells, and during the night the doors were kept open, and the gas burning, in order that the warders, who walked up and down the passage, might be able to see at a glance that the prisoners were there. When the curé of the Madeleine was arrested, the gravest charge that could be brought against him (says this writer) was that, in fulfilment of his duty as a priest, he had administered the first Communion to the Prince Imperial, and had confessed the Empress. He was treated at first, it is affirmed, with revolting brutality by his gaolers. "They were not content," wrote the *Times* correspondent, "with outraging his feelings by coarse attacks upon all that he held most sacred; they did what they could to make him believe—a man of seventy-five, whose grey hairs alone might have secured him some little regard—that he was in immediate danger of his life. 'We will soon give you your paradise,' said one fellow. 'If six men are wanted,' said another, a captain of the National Guard, 'to execute this criminal, apply to me; I have them all ready below.'" The Archbishop of Paris chatted very cheerfully with the correspondent, and discussed the chances of his being put to death with as unmoved a voice and manner as if he had been calculating the value of a life-policy. As regards food and dress, the prisoners appear to have been treated well, and they spoke highly of the consideration shown by the prison officials. They were permitted to have whatever food they liked to send for; the Archbishop was arrayed in some of the *insignia* of



RUINS OF PARIS AFTER THE SIEGE.

his office; and all were allowed books and journals. When first arrested, they were kept in complete and painful isolation; but the rules generally were relaxed after a time, and it became less difficult for their friends to see them.

The arrest of M. Bonjean, the President of the Court of Cassation, happened in a singular way. He sent a letter to his friend, the Procureur-Général, making an appointment with him, just at the moment when some Communal officials were taking possession of the Procureur-Général's house. "It is very kind of M. Bonjean," said they, "thus to give us his address, and tell us when he will be at home." They carried him off to Mazas, and for more than a month, at the period of the visit paid by the *Times* correspondent, he had been a close prisoner (except for a brief period in the day allowed for exercise) in a cell described as being about fifteen feet by six, and twelve feet high. "His imprisonment, however," added the writer, "M. Bonjean seemed to care very little about. He declared, jestingly, that he had been a prisoner all his life—self-condemned for the last forty years to nearly eighteen hours' hard labour a day over his books and papers—and that he could work as well at these in a prison-cell as in a palace. But he had felt keenly the complete deprivation of all knowledge of what was happening in the outside world, not being allowed to have news even of his wife, whom he had left very ill, and he declared that throughout the whole siege the constant roar of cannon had never affected him so painfully as now that he was kept in utter ignorance of what every shot portended, and could only divine that Frenchmen were killing Frenchmen." After all, there can be little doubt that M. Bonjean and his companions were far happier than the members of the Commune in all the riot and excitement of their temporary success.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Rossel, the new Delegate of War—His Character and Previous Career—His Opinions on the Conclusion of Peace—He determines on joining the Commune—His Criticisms on the Communal Leaders—His first Acts on becoming Delegate of War—Continual Changes in the Administration—Rossel's Observations on Cluseret—Intrigues for Power—Military Reforms of Rossel—Perilous Condition of Fort Issy—Dissensions between Rossel and the Committee of Public Safety—Resignation of Félix Pyat as Member of that Committee—Further Intrigues—Fall of Fort Issy—Quarrels between Rossel and the Commune—Arrest and Escape of Rossel—Vésinier's Account of the Resignation and Arrest of Rossel—High-handed Measures of that Officer—His Letter of Resignation—Necessity of Stringent Measures with the Communal Troops—Apprehension of Rossel by the Versailles Army—His Appearance and Manners—The Capture of Moulin-Saquet—Evacuation of Fort Issy—The Commune and the Clergy—Use of Churches for Political Meetings—Discovery of Malpractices in a Paris Convent.

ON the deposition of Cluseret, the post of Delegate of War was conferred on Captain or Colonel Rossel, who had previously acted as Chief of the Staff to Cluseret, and, for a short time, as President of the Military Court which was appointed to supervise the defence and to punish acts of insubordination. Louis Nathaniel Rossel, though very young, was one of the most capable men the Commune produced. He was born in Brittany in 1844, and was the son of a French father and a Scotch mother. This admixture of blood seems to have given force and gravity to his disposition. He has been described as entirely wanting in the showy and theatrical qualities of the French nature. Energetic, practical, and business-like, he appears to have had a quiet contempt for the declamation and posturing which generally form so large a part of the life of French Republicans. He was also very little of a *doctrinaire*, though sincerely attached to democratic views of government and society. His tendencies were indeed rather English than French; for he thought more of duty, and of unpretending devotion to work, than of speeches, flags, epigrams, and fine phrases. Rossel was a professional soldier, and one who would doubtless have distinguished himself (notwithstanding some faults of temper and character, which stood in the way of his better qualities) had he lived, and been placed under more favourable circumstances. He was with the army of Bazaine at Metz, as an inferior officer of Engineers; and, while there, was so impressed with the absolute incapacity of the commanding officers that, even as early as the first half of August, 1870, he formed a plan of expelling the whole body. He communicated his ideas to a comrade, and both were convinced that with fifty resolute men it would be easy to seize and carry off all the Staff officers from the head-quarters. But not more than ten men fitted for the service could be found; and so the project fell through. The young Engineer officer afterwards entered into intrigues with some

of the generals for the overthrow of Bazaine, whose relations with the Imperialists and the Prussians, after the revolution of September 4th, were regarded with great suspicion by a large part of the army, and by most of the Metzers. Nothing came of these plots either, except that Rossel fell for a time under the displeasure of the Marshal. Immediately after the surrender of Metz, he escaped, first to Luxemburg, then to Brussels, and next to England; whence, under a fatal impulse, he returned to France.

It would appear to have been early in December that Rossel re-entered his native country. He was presented to M. Gambetta at Tours, and ultimately accepted the position of chief Engineer officer in the camp at Nevers. The conclusion of peace excited in him the highest indignation. He regretted that Gambetta, though without military knowledge, had not taken command of the armies, and seemed to consider that his enthusiasm alone would have ensured victory—a very wild conclusion, which there was nothing to justify. "The defence until death," he wrote in a brief military essay, "the continuance of the struggle until victory, is no longer a Utopian idea—is not an error. France still possesses an immense war-material, and a large number of soldiers. The line of the Loire, which forms an excellent frontier, is hardly touched until Bourges is lost; but even if that town were in the hands of the enemy, an attack on the southern provinces is difficult, owing to the mountains of Auvergne, which would oblige the foe to divide his efforts between Lyons and Bordeaux. If the Prussians were checked on either of those lines, they would both be reopened. As a general rule, a defence until death can never do harm to a people. . . . . We are wanting in patience; we conclude peace as rashly as we went to war. The people are too changeable and too sceptic. Eighty years since they were capable of being roused to fanaticism by the notions of liberty, of equalitarian propaganda, of universal democracy. What will they believe in now?"*

The force of these ideas induced Rossel, on the 19th of March, 1871 (the day following that on which the Commune may be said to have been born), to address to the Minister of War at Versailles a letter resigning his post at the camp of Nevers. He wrote:—"I have the honour to inform you that I am about to proceed to Paris, to place myself at the disposal of the Government forces (*sic*) which are about to be organised there. Having learnt by a Versailles despatch, published this day, that two parties are struggling for mastery in the country, I do not hesitate in joining the side which has not concluded peace, and which does not include in its ranks generals guilty of capitulation." Rossel always affirmed—and doubtless with sincerity—that he did not foresee the possibility of a civil war which would go beyond street-fighting. He was disgusted with the incompetency of the Government; he was angered at the peace; and he believed—wildly but honestly believed—that with 600 field-pieces in Paris, and with small arms and ammunition in still greater abundance, it would be possible to "snatch back victory" from the Germans, if the revolutionary and fighting party were in power. His subsequent experience of the Commune convinced him, when it was too late, that this party was just as incompetent and as selfish as that which it momentarily set aside in Paris. But for the present he was under a fatal illusion, and he determined on taking the step which led to his death. Even before the 18th of March he had meditated what course he should pursue in the event of an insurrection in the capital. His resolve was finally precipitated by the condemnation to death of several men of the revolutionary party for a movement which had taken place during the siege, by the suppression of newspapers, and by what he considered the cowardly abandonment of Paris by 40,000 of the regular army on the breaking out of the Communistical disturbances. Amidst the prevailing disaster and feebleness, he regarded the Parisian revolutionary party as "the lesser evil." This was not a very hopeful spirit in which to start on his enterprise; but it soon became even less cheerful. He left Nevers on the night of the 19th of March, and arrived in Paris on the morning of the 20th. The names of Lullier and Assi on the proclamations of the Commune inspired him with a feeling of distrust and annoyance. Nevertheless, he offered his services to the new authorities, and received a command. The discussions between the Communal delegates and the District Committee, or Legionary Council—a body distinct from the Central Committee—were constant and serious. Rossel has left it on record, in his "Posthumous Papers," that the former Committee "confiscated the municipal authority in the name of the Federation [of the National Guard], and exercised it without sagacity, and sometimes without honesty." He further described it as "the most idiotic little piece of despotic machinery that can be imagined."* The continual changes in the

* Rossel's Posthumous Papers. Translated from the French. 1872.

* Rossel writes as if there were only one "District Committee;" but the name seems to suggest that there were several—one for each district.

commands greatly weakened the organisation of the forces; and the expedition of the 2nd of April against Courbevoie and Asnières, which was planned by Rossel, ended, as the reader is aware, in total failure. Two of the battalions, according to Rossel, were completely drunk; others were in want of food; and the officers failed entirely in doing their duty. Rossel was immediately afterwards arrested, and almost as quickly released, in a somewhat mysterious way. Disgusted with the revolution and the revolutionists, he had made up his mind to leave Paris, when Cluseret, on the 3rd of April, begged him to act as head of his Staff at the War Department. About the middle of the month he became President of the Military Court; and, on the dissolution of that tribunal, he resigned his post as Chief of the Staff. The fall of Cluseret, in consequence of the disaster at Issy, made way for his former subordinate as the chief military administrator.

When Rossel succeeded to the Ministry of War, he was only "provisionally" appointed to the post. This qualification seemed to show some distrust; but if the Executive Commission had known how little regard Rossel felt for the Commune itself, apart from any hope it presented of a renewal of the war with Germany, he would probably not have been appointed at all. However, he resolved, having accepted the trust, to do the best he could for the existing situation in Paris. The very day on which he assumed office (April 30th), he issued a decree charging Citizen Gaillard, senior, with the construction of barricades behind the fortifications, as a second line of defence; and directing him to appoint, in conjunction with the municipalities, engineers or delegates to each of the exterior arrondissements, who were to work at those constructions under his orders. In addition to this second line of defence, barricades, forming three citadels, were to be erected at the Trocadero, the Buttes Montmartre, and the Pantheon. The laying out of these citadels was to be determined on the ground by the Delegate of War himself, as soon as the engineers were appointed for their construction. General Wroblewski was to have the entire command of the left bank of the Seine, and of the troops and forts of Issy and Ivry; and the commanders of troops, and all other officers of the Commune, were directed to acknowledge his quality and obey his orders. The Committee of Public Safety, in order to increase the order, energy, and regularity of the War Department, decreed, on the 1st of May, that the War Delegation should be composed of two divisions—the military direction and the administration; that Rossel should have the chief direction of military operations; and that the Central Committee of the National Guard should be charged with the different services of the War Administration, under the control of the Military Commission. Nothing more clearly showed the inherent weakness of the Commune, and the hesitation, bewilderment, and incapacity of its leaders, than these perpetual changes in the administration of affairs. Never was there such a shifting quicksand of a government. No arrangement lasted many days. It was impossible to tell with whom the final authority resided; and it is still a matter of difficulty to trace the constantly-recurring transformations of this ignoble Proteus. The decree of the Committee of Public Safety would seem, in effect, to have transferred Rossel from the post of Delegate of War to that of Commander-in-Chief of the Communal army, almost immediately after he had been appointed to the former office; but it would not be safe to speak with certainty of anything happening in the midst of such a weltering chaos.

In recording these events in his "Posthumous Papers," Rossel remarks that, after a month of power and of struggling, Cluseret was completely worn out by the end of April. At first he had desired to be the absolute, undisputed, and uncontrolled chief of the revolutionary forces; but in this he failed. In the earlier days of the Commune he was placed under the orders of the Executive Commission, chiefly represented by Félix Pyat and Delescluze; afterwards, he was controlled by other fleeting authorities; and he seems not to have had sufficient strength of mind either to deliver himself from that subjection, or to resign his powers. He soon became an object of suspicion, as every member of the Commune did in turn; and he was in imminent peril of arrest when Rossel ceased to be Chief of the Staff. The latter appears, by his own admissions, to have been of an intriguing disposition, with probably an admixture of vanity and ambition, though the chief motives of his conduct were doubtless patriotic. Immediately after his resignation of the office he held under Cluseret, he listened with favour to a plan that was proposed to him by a member of the Commune, named Gérardin, for nullifying the Commune by having the power transferred to the hands of a Committee of Public Safety, or some other executive committee, composed of young and resolute members, in which he (Rossel) should share with Dombrowski the conduct of military operations. "In the meantime," says Rossel, "the members of the War Commission chose me for the confidant of their anxieties; and even systematic Republicans, who had not participated in the proceedings of the Commune, offered me spon-

taneously their systems and their support. I thus found myself the centre of an incoherent and varied movement, whose unconscious watchword was to 'save the Revolution by annulling the Commune.' I let things take their course. I was as much the enemy of the Commune as the sensible Republicans were; yet I still thought that the Commune could and ought to be beneficial." The fact, no doubt, is that the reputable parts of the Parisian population, even among the Republicans, were getting utterly disgusted with the tyranny, stupidity, and blundering mismanagement of the Commune; so that a counter-revolution, if headed by persons of respectability and talent, would probably have met with considerable support. Rossel says he was sure of the countenance of the energetic and intelligent members of the Commune; others offered their financial experience; and the generals, he adds, obeyed him willingly. He refers here to the period before his appointment as Delegate of War. A Committee of Public Safety was afterwards created, as already recorded in these pages; but it only imperfectly carried out the idea suggested by Rossel, for several of the well-known incapables of the Commune found places in its composition. Its leading member was Félix Pyat—a man of violent language and of extravagant ideas.

On commencing his duties as War Delegate, on the evening of April 30th, Rossel drew up a plan for a tactical and administrative group of five battalions, to be commanded by a colonel and two lieutenant-colonels, and to serve as a basis for the organisation of an effective army. In this way, eight regiments were formed, "which were in reality," says Rossel, "active brigades of about 2,000 men each, with forty field-pieces." The object of this reconstruction, together with some others, was to enable the new War Minister to give battle before Paris, that being the sole chance of success for the defenders. Rossel, as a professional soldier who had seen some service, could not fail to observe that a passive defence would only, at the best, delay the fall of the fortifications, and was powerless to prevent it in the end. He therefore turned his attention towards forming an army of attack; but he was too short a time in office to do much, and he met with considerable opposition. General Eudes (for the title of "general" seems to have come up again very shortly after its suppression) was commissioned by Rossel to take charge of Fort Issy; but he proceeded thither unwillingly, and no sooner had he reached the spot (which was on the 1st of May) than he devised various pretexts for getting back. According to Rossel, he sent to the Commune, to the Committee of Public Safety, and to the Ministry, despatches in which he warmly expressed his sense of the impossibility of holding out any longer, accompanied, very inconsistently, by demands for reinforcements, provisions, ammunition, clothes, tobacco, cannon, &c. Pyat, however, would not listen to these representations, but constantly replied, "Preserve Fort Issy at any cost." On the 3rd of May, Eudes became still more pressing in his demands; so much so, indeed, that Rossel determined to go himself to Issy, and make an effort to relieve him. The War Delegate took with him a portion of the battalion on guard at his department, which he directed to wait for him at Vanvres; but, being delayed by a fall from his horse, and other circumstances, he did not reach the fort until night. On the road he had picked up three battalions, and their presence reassured the defenders. Eudes, who had taken up his quarters in the darkest and least exposed casemate, still complained of the danger. To his great surprise, Rossel found Dombrowski at Issy. The command of the right bank of the Seine had been assigned by Rossel to this general; but the latter had just received from the Committee of Public Safety an order investing him with the command of all the active forces, while leaving to Rossel the Ministry of War. Dombrowski now recommended the Minister not to interrupt his organising labours, adding that he (Dombrowski) would, in virtue of his new powers, undertake all the active work. This was agreed to by Rossel; but on representing to the Committee of Public Safety the inopportuneness of a single military command, the first decree was revoked, and Dombrowski's jurisdiction again confined to the right bank.

Several other interferences with the plans and directions of Rossel appear to have taken place. On the 3rd of May, the Committee of Public Safety sent an order to Wroblewski, who commanded the left wing from the Bièvre to the Seine, to go to the assistance of Fort Issy. Wroblewski complained of receiving orders from all quarters, but thought himself bound to obey the Committee. He therefore went to Issy, and during his absence the redoubt of Moulin-Saquet, belonging to his command, was attacked so effectually that there was a panic-stricken flight of its defenders, and the guns were carried off, together with 300 prisoners. This fresh calamity led to a scene of recrimination between Rossel and the Commune, on the 4th of May. The War Delegate, in his "Posthumous Papers," alleges that he voluntarily went before the Commune, to make complaints. Vésinier, in the "History of the Commune," says that Rossel was summoned before a secret sitting of that body, to



ENTRY OF FRENCH TROOPS INTO AMIENS.

give explanations. It is certain, however, that when there he reproached Pyat with displacing some of the generals without communicating with him, by which act the defence had been disorganised and compromised. Pyat denied having done what was alleged against him; but Rossel retorted that he had himself seen the despatches; and added that he could not answer for the safety of Paris until the evil caused by this interference had been repaired. On the following day Citizen Arnold laid before the Commune and the members of the Committee of Public Safety the different orders in question. The most important of these (according to the narrative of M. Vésinier) was signed by Gérardin, Antoine Arnauld, and Léo Meillet, with a postscript by Félix Pyat. Having looked at this, Pyat said he had no recollection of it, but admitted that his memory had been weakened by excessive work. He then gave in his resignation as a member of the Committee of Public Safety. So far, Rossel was triumphant; but his unfortunate tendency to intrigue again showed itself. On leaving the Commune, as he himself states, he went with Gérardin to a meeting of the Committee of Public Safety, where he arranged with some members of the Central Committee of the National Guard (which was now making an effort at supreme power) to hand over to them the administrative branch and the organisation services dependent on his department. It does not appear, however, that anything came of this.

M. Vésinier complains that, after his affair with Félix Pyat, Rossel published a bitter letter, in which he accused the Artillery Committee, the Central Committee of the National Guard, the commander and garrison of Fort Issy, the chiefs of legions, and the Commune itself, of indecision, inaction, weakness, and incapacity. He concluded his letter by giving in his resignation, and demanding "a cell at Mazas." This was on the 9th of May. A day or two before, Rossel had paid his last visit to Fort Issy, the desperate situation of which was now more than ever apparent. Eudes had abandoned it to the charge of one Collet, the Chief of his Staff. Rossel sent there an Engineer officer, who did the best he could to repair the fortifications; and at the same time the War Minister, as a last desperate resource, formed a plan for assuming the offensive. There was so much jealousy amongst the various commanders, however, that no active steps could be taken, and indeed it was now too late. Issy was again abandoned by its garrison on the 8th,



BEFORE THE STATUE OF FREDERICK THE GREAT.

and on the 9th it was occupied by the Versailles troops. Rossel was informed of the fact shortly after dictating his letter of resignation, and he at once placarded the walls of Paris with bills which curtly stated :—"The tricolour flag floats over Fort Issy, abandoned by its garrison." There was a tone of triumph and of accusation in this announcement, which certainly ill-became a Minister of the Power which had suffered such a reverse. Taken in connection with the sweeping charges brought against others (however just those charges may have been), it looked like a want of sympathy with the movement in which he was embarked, and rendered the distrust of his colleagues not unnatural.

The account given by Rossel himself of his fall from power states that the Commune, on receiving his letter of resignation, sent him two successive deputations to beg him to remain, and that, on his refusal, the supreme authorities ordered the War Commission to take the direction of the War Delegation, and to arrest the late Minister. At the same time, according to this narrative of the person chiefly concerned, the Central Committee of the National Guard, which was sitting at the Ministry of War, sent deputation after deputation to Rossel to ask him to attend. He went there, and explained the difficulties of his position, caused by his being required to perform such multifarious and incongruous duties. After leaving the Ministry, he received an envoy from the Central Committee, informing him that they were going to ask the Commune to grant him full powers. At ten o'clock he returned to the Ministry of War, where, after a good deal of wrangling with the War Commission, he was asked to continue in the exercise of his functions until the next day; which, he relates, he only consented to do on the understanding that one of the members of the Commission should remain in his office, so that he should have nothing to sign. On the following morning (May 9th), the War Commission requested his presence at the Hôtel de Ville. For some hours he remained at the Questure, a species of prisoner; and at five o'clock in the evening, Gérardin (with whom, as a member of the Committee of Public Safety, he had recently been at issue with reference to the displacement of the generals) came and joined him, with the intention of demanding that he should be allowed to share his imprisonment. A decree of accusation had been passed against Rossel by the Commune. A court-martial, of which Collet was to be president, was already named. "I could not bear," writes Rossel, "the idea of appearing as an accused before that Collet whom I had seen cowering before the shells at Issy; and it was then that I determined to evade the justice of the Commune."* He took Gérardin in his carriage, and drove to the Boulevard St. Michel, where they separated, each looking out for a hiding-place.*

Some discrepancies exist between this relation and that of M. Vésinier. The latter says that, after the publication by Rossel of his letter of accusation, and of his placard so strangely announcing the fall of Issy, the Committee of Public Safety "could only do one thing—accede to the wishes of Citizen Rossel by granting him 'a cell at Mazas;' which was done. But the Delegate of War, after reflection, very reasonably preferred the pure air of liberty. After having been consigned to the Hôtel de Ville, under the charge of Gérardin, Citizen Rossel and his obliging guard profited by the occasion, and vanished."† It will be seen from this that the ex-Secretary of the Commune and ex-Editor of the *Official Journal* says nothing of the repeated endeavours which Rossel alleges were made to induce him to withdraw his resignation; nor of the other circumstances which attended his fall from power. The narrative of Vésinier is characterised by suppressions; but there is little to object to in the remark that Rossel gave way to an irritable and violent temper, and that he might have afforded great assistance in the war had he exerted his talents in a different manner. That Rossel was somewhat arrogant and self-opinionated seems to be clear, even on his own admissions. He was evidently determined to carry on the war in a high-handed manner, and perhaps it was a necessity of the desperate situation. This was seen in the answer he sent, immediately on entering into his office as War Minister, to the summons to surrender addressed to the Commandant of Fort Issy on the 30th of April. The Versailles officer in command of the trenches wrote:—"In the name and by order of the Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief, we summon the Commandant of the insurgent forces at the present moment in Fort Issy to surrender himself and all his troops in the fort. A delay of a quarter of an hour will be granted to answer the summons. If the Commandant of the insurgent forces declares in writing for himself, and in the name of the entire garrison of Fort Issy, that he obeys the present summons, without other conditions than that of saving their lives and liberties, on condition of not residing in Paris, this favour will be granted. If the Commandant fails to reply in the space of time indicated, the whole garrison will be shot." This was certainly a violent stretch

* Rossel's Posthumous Papers.
† History of the Commune of Paris.

ing of the laws of war, and Rossel, on the 1st of May, was moved to reply in the same spirit. His letter ran:—"My dear Comrade,—Next time you permit yourself to send us a summons so insolent as that in your handwriting yesterday, I will have your *parlementaire* shot, in accordance with the usages of war.—Your devoted comrade, ROSSEL." Immediately after his resignation of the Ministry of War, an order signed by him appeared in the *Official Journal*, forbidding the interruption of firing in combat, even though the enemy should throw up the butts of their muskets, or wave a white flag. Cowards who fled, or remained isolated behind, were to be sabred by the cavalry, or, if too numerous, to be cannonaded. This must have been one of the latest of Rossel's official acts. The ex-Delegate of War says of himself, in his "Posthumous Papers," that, although he had in fact never caused the death of a man, this was owing to "a strange chance" rather than to the effect of his will. We have already seen that he pronounced a sentence of death before the Military Court, but that it was quashed. "As great an enemy to killing as to warfare," Rossel wrote, "I nevertheless accept all the consequences of the situations in which I am placed." We have no reason to suppose he was not a man of humane disposition; but, had he become dictator, as he desired, he would undoubtedly have ruled with a stern hand.

In the letter of resignation, dated May 9th, which so excited the indignation of M. Vésinier, Rossel stated that he could no longer endure the responsibility of commanding where every one deliberated and no one obeyed. He then went on to complain of the inefficient state of the Communal forces, and continued:—"Yesterday, when every one ought to have been working or under fire, the Chiefs of the Legions were discussing the substitution of a new system of organisation for that of mine. My indignation brought them to other thoughts, and they promised me that to-day should be the last time they would attempt a similar course. An organised force of 12,000 men with which I engaged to march against the enemy was to have been summoned at eleven A.M., and now half-past one P.M. has come, and there are only about 7,000 men ready. Thus, the incapacity of the Committee has hindered the organisation of artillery; the vacillation of the Central Committee stops the organisation of men; and the petty pre-occupations of the Chiefs of the Legions paralyse mobilisation. I am not a man to recoil before repression; and yesterday, while the chiefs were discussing, an execution-party awaited them in the yard. But I will not endorse this odious system of executions, which might perhaps draw from this chaos, organisation, obedience, and victory. My predecessor was wrong to discuss matters in the midst of this absurd situation. I have two lines to choose—to break through the obstacles impeding my course of action, or to retire. I will not break through the obstacles, because the obstacles are your weakness. Nor will I attack the sovereignty of the people. I retire, and I have the honour to demand of you a cell at Mazas."

The sentence with reference to the "odious system of executions" is confused and self-contradictory; but it is evident that Rossel was in favour of summary measures in dealing with the loose, disorganised, and often refractory force with which he had to encounter the enemy. He can scarcely be blamed for holding such views and avowing such intentions. The blame lay with those who had created the state of civil war, and imposed upon their generals the alternative of being beaten, or of making an effective army of fighting men, in the face of the adversary, by exceptional acts of rigour. The insubordination, the want of cohesion and mutual self-reliance, the liability to panic, and the absence of resource and adaptability to circumstances, which had so disastrously characterised the French army in their encounters with the Germans, were now again manifest in the conduct of the insurgent troops. "These fellows," said Rossel in one of his memoranda written at the time, "are not courageous. I think there is but little courage amongst the wearers of gold-lace. I could quote examples of timidity, cowardice, indifference to duty, and mean and silly passions." Clearly, nothing could be got out of such men, excepting by severe coercion.

After parting from Gérardin, Rossel got out of Paris, and, failing to quit the country, was arrested, on the 7th of June, as a deserter from the regular army. Marshal MacMahon, giving evidence before the Committee of Inquiry into the insurrection, observed, in the course of his replies:—"When Rossel was arrested, he was brought to my head-quarters at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He denied that he was Rossel; he seemed confused, broken-down, and bewildered. Pressed with our questions, and embarrassed, especially when his father was mentioned, he ended by saying, 'Well, I *am* Colonel Rossel. I am tired of concealing my name. I am at length delivered from the constrained life that I have been so long leading.' From the moment he made this avowal, he was himself again, and recovered his natural ease of manner and self-possession. He was under the impression that he would be shot immediately, and said to the Commissary of Police charged with the

duty of interrogating him, 'All I ask is, that they will allow twenty-four hours to elapse before my execution.'" Rossel's anticipations in this respect, however, were erroneous. He was not shot until many months later.

A correspondent of the *Daily News*, who visited the young Delegate of War during his brief term of office, gave an interesting description of his appearance and manners. He was of middle height and slight build, and wore a short, fair beard. His quiet, self-confident look, his deliberate and thoughtful way of speaking, and his reserved manners, made him seem much more like an Englishman, an American, or a Prussian, than a Frenchman. He spoke English well, made no secret of his anxiety to introduce American smartness and dislike of routine into the French administrations, and was as great an abhorrer of formulas as Mr. Carlyle himself. When the correspondent once asked him why he sat as President of the Military Court in plain clothes, and not in uniform, he replied, speaking in English, "Oh, you know, we aim at being rather American in our ideas, and especially in our detestation of forms and ceremonies. We don't want to sit in wigs and gowns, like the English judges. If I happen to be in uniform, I go to the Court in that way; if I am in plain clothes, I do not change them." After his elevation to the position of Delegate of War, however, he thought it advisable to assume the dress of a general; but he had it made after a very simple pattern. The English correspondent found him living at the War Office, in an unpretending fashion. He was lying in bed, after his fall from his horse; and, as the room belonged to the period of Louis XIV., and still retained its heavy blue silk hangings, gilded chairs, and other paraphernalia of the old Court, the contrast between its associations and its present use was very striking. An aide-de-camp with a court-sword received each person who desired to speak to the Minister; and the latter was surrounded by clerks, officers of all ranks, and applicants of every description.

The taking of Moulin-Saquet on the 3rd of May, owing to the enforced absence of Wroblewski, was a very sanguinary affair. The redoubt was suddenly attacked by a body of troops, who entered while the garrison were asleep, the sentinels having fled without giving warning when they found that the enemy was upon them. Eight hundred men occupied the work, and two hundred of these were left dead on the spot, the Versailles soldiers giving no quarter. The rest escaped in a wild rush of terror; indeed, there was scarcely any resistance whatever. The Communal account of the disaster was that a detachment of the Versailles troops, dressed in the uniform of the National Guards, presented itself at the gate as a patrol, and was admitted to the fort, on giving the countersign. The garrison, thus taken by surprise, were driven from the redoubt, and the intruders immediately began to carry away the cannon. The result of an inquiry made into the affair was that the commandant of the 55th Battalion was suspected of having sold the watchword to the enemy, or at least of having divulged it in a public *café*. There had been an unsuccessful attack the previous night (the 2nd), and after all it was found impossible to hold the position. The work was so much exposed to the fire of Bicêtre, Ivry, and Hautes Bruyères, that the Government troops were unable to remain; and Moulin-Saquet was therefore speedily in the hands of the insurgents once more. This, however, was of the less importance, as in other respects the Versaillese were unquestionably making way, and the fall of Fort Issy a few days later showed how certain was the triumph of the nation, and how sure the discomfiture of the violent faction which reigned by dint of terror over Paris.

On the night of the 8th of May Fort Vanvres took fire, and, as the flames could not be extinguished, the garrison were obliged to evacuate the work, though they afterwards returned. It was on the same night that the evacuation of Issy took place, in consequence of an explosion which rendered the fort no longer tenable. The general in command had talked of blowing it up, rather than letting it pass into the hands of the enemy; but he found he could not do this without sacrificing the garrison. He therefore abandoned the place, to the great disgust of Rossel. The garrison escaped by a trench or subterranean way, and the Versaillese entered without difficulty on the morning of the 9th. A hundred and nineteen guns were captured in the fort, and ten more in the village. Ammunition and provisions to a large amount were also found, as well as a quantity of brandy containing an infusion of tobacco, which (according to Versailles reports) was used for the purpose of exciting the National Guards, but the principal effect of which seems to have been to give a fatal character to the wounds of those who drank it. About twenty-five or thirty of the garrison were in the neighbouring village of Issy at the time the Government troops entered, and these at once surrendered themselves. Shortly after the Versaillese were in possession of the fort they observed a strong body of insurgents marching towards the place, who, being unaware of the state of affairs, were about, as they thought, to relieve guard. The enemy, however, received them with a heavy and unexpected fire, and forced them to take to flight, after losing several of their number.

Raoul Rigault was succeeded at the Prefecture (or, as it was called by the Communists, the ex-Prefecture) by Citizen Cournet, formerly one of the deputies of Paris, a position which he resigned in order to devote himself to the Commune. He was chief editor of the *Réveil*, and is described by M. Vésinier as "a militant Republican, well known for his zeal and devotion." He had for his Secretary-general a person of the name of Regnard, who, in dress and manner, recalled the typical French revolutionist of 1793. The latter gave some explanations to an English newspaper correspondent with reference to the treatment of the clergy and the places of public worship. He said that the Catholic priests must, by reason of their profession, be opposed to the Commune. They had kept up communications with the Government at Versailles, and had, in every way they could, acted against the new order of things. Therefore, as a state of war existed, the Commune felt itself justified in using energetic measures to repress the intrigues of the priesthood. It had been discovered that the clergy had concealed in several churches and seminaries a large number of weapons of every description which they had received from the wounded during the late war, when attending on them in the ambulances, and which they had not returned to their owners or to the State. This involved a threat to the Commune. At the same time there was no intention to persecute the clergy. As soon as peace was proclaimed, they would be set at liberty; and in the meanwhile they were only detained as hostages, in case the Government of M. Thiers should execute the prisoners of war. Some of the churches had been closed, and others opened as clubs; but this was because the people in the particular parishes where such facts had occurred had determined so to use the churches, as they had a right to do, the edifices being their property. Other parishes which chose to preserve the church services were at liberty to do so. Citizen Regnard regretted that a Commissary of Police near St. Roch had taken upon himself to close that church; but, as the parishioners of the district had remonstrated, orders had been given to re-open it, and the Commissary was dismissed. In certain directions, particular churches remained closed, because it was known that there would be riots if any attempt were made to celebrate mass in them, the popular feeling against the clergy being very bitter. "In a word," said Regnard, "the people are sovereign, and are free to secularise the churches if they think proper."* From another account it appeared that when the curé of St. Roch demanded of the Communal authorities whether his church was invaded by their orders, they replied, "No; but the people must have their way." The curé accordingly removed the church vessels, and the beadle, the concierge, and four priests were arrested because they refused to divulge the hiding-places of the ecclesiastical property. It must have been after this that orders were issued for undoing the arbitrary work of the Commissary of Police, who had closed the church.

The political club meetings held in some of the places of worship were amongst the most repulsive features of the day. A correspondent of the *Times* attended one of these meetings held in the church of St. Eustache. Some 3,000 people were congregated round the pulpit; the edifice was dimly lighted, and the aisles and roof were lost in darkness. "A workman in a blouse," says the writer, "was declaiming from the pulpit upon the 'Assassins of Versailles,' and the effect for an instant was quite grand as he said, after a pause which was almost audible in the great church, 'Citizens, we are quiet here; but at this moment our brothers, and sons, and fathers are being killed in hundreds barely a mile off in defence of an idea!' Not satisfied with his effect, the orator degenerated into the coarseness which is inevitable, and one shuddered involuntarily at the strange sound, as peals of laughter echoed among the columns, and died away in the groined roof. It was evidently the proper thing to wear one's hat in order to prove oneself a good citizen, but fully a third among the congregation remained uncovered, and one heard people remark on every side, with shakings of the head, 'This is not right; no wonder Paris suffers as she does.' It struck me that the greater number of the listeners appeared to have come there more to see a sight than for any serious purpose; and the whole affair, after the first flush of novelty had worn off, was terribly dull and devoid of interest." The folly of the Communists in thus outraging the religious sentiment of a large proportion of the people was extreme. Such a course could only have had the effect of exasperating the feelings of the reactionary party, and rendering still more pitiless the revenge of the middle and aristocratic classes as soon as they had regained the upper hand.

The detestation of the priesthood, always very strong amongst the working classes of Paris, was increased at this period, and not unnaturally, by the discovery of certain malpractices at the Convent in the Rue de Picpus. In consequence of this discovery, an investigation was set on foot, and the Special Correspondent of the *Times* in Paris obtained

* *Daily News* correspondent.

admission to the building, which was near the Mazas prison. The facts were of the most suspicious nature, and powerfully support the views of those who regard such places as affording opportunities for the grossest oppression and cruelty. Close to the convent was an establishment of Jesuits, who escaped at the first sign of approaching danger. The correspondent was accompanied by an English friend, who went thither under special official orders to investigate the case of an English "sister." The party were conducted over the premises by one of the agents of the Commune in possession. "He pointed out to us," says the writer, "the fact, of which there certainly could exist no kind of doubt, that the two buildings"—that of the convent and that of the Jesuit establishment—"communicated one with the other, by means of an old door which still existed at the back of a stable, as well as by other apertures in the garden wall, which showed signs of having been recently closed up. Through the old door we passed into the Sisters' garden. In the centre stands a gymnasium (I suppose for the use of the children brought up under the Sisters' care), and further on their cemetery, a lovely spot, where, under the heavy shade of ancient cypresses, lie bearers of some of the most ancient names in France. Some of the vaults had been opened, and many lead coffins, half-covered with rotting velvet and gold lace, lay exposed to the light of day, awaiting an examination at the hands of the Minister of Justice." At the extreme end of the garden were three little conical huts, side by side, resembling white ants' nests; and when the convent was first occupied by the National Guards, each of these huts was tenanted by an old woman, enclosed in a wooden cage, like a chickens' pen. The buildings were six feet square by seven in height, with a slate roof, through which daylight was visible. The three old women were hopeless idiots. "The Lady Superior," continued the account, "admitted, when first questioned, that the three sufferers had lived in their hideous prison for nine years, in an atmosphere of stifling heat throughout the summer, and half-frozen with cold throughout the winter; 'but,' she added, 'they were idiots when they came.' The conductor of the inquiry replied that, if such were the case, it was illegal to have admitted them to the convent at all, and that, even supposing them to have been admitted, the place where they were found was not a fit dwelling-place for a dog. A key was discovered among her papers, labelled 'key of the great vault;' but where this great vault may be has not yet been found out. The Superior and her nuns keep a uniform and persistent silence upon the point; excavations have been made at different points in the garden, and under the high altar of the chapel, but hitherto without effect." In an isolated building in the nuns' garden were found mattresses furnished with straps and buckles; also two iron corsets, an iron skull-cap, and a species of rack turned by a cog-wheel, apparently intended for bending back the body with force. "The Superior," said the *Times* correspondent, "explained that these were orthopædic instruments—a superficial falsehood. The mattresses and straps struck me as being easily accounted for: I have seen such things used in French midwifery, and in cases of violent delirium; but the rack and its adjuncts are justly objects of grave suspicion, for they imply a use of brutal force which no disease at present known would justify. Arrived at the entrance gate, our guide nudged me, telling me in whispers to look at the old woman who was wandering about, followed by a younger one, stooping from time to time to pick up a leaf, or rub her hands with sand and gravel. 'That is Sœur Bernardine,' he said, 'one of the three prisoners of the wooden cages. She is the most sane in mind of the three, and we keep her here under the care of one of our wives, to cheer her up. She is only fifty, though she looks past seventy. The other two have been removed, as they were rendered violent by the crowd and change of scene.' I passed close to her, and she looked up—a soft, pale face, with sunken eyes shaded by the frills of a great cap. She looked at me dazedly, without taking any notice, and, stooping, again filled her hands with refuse coffee-grounds, which she put into her mouth until prevented by her companion." It cannot be doubted that an equally unsparing investigation into other conventual institutions would reveal similar scandals and oppressions. The discovery of these malpractices in the Picpus convent came very unfortunately for the Church. Such facts gave the Commune a plausible ground for denying even ordinary liberties to the various religious bodies; and they were certain to be treasured in remembrance as a weapon against the priestly party for a very long time. The discovery of the Picpus scandal was the only good work of the Commune. The investigation appears to have been carried out without violence, and with a real and creditable regard for humanity and justice. If regular Governments will not grapple with such crying evils, they will simply forward the day of their own downfall, and prepare the ruin which, with wisdom, they might avert.



CHAPTER XXXIII.

Fresh Acts of the Commune—Proclamation of M. Thiers to the Parisians—Speech of Prince Bismarck on Intervention—Decree of the Commune for the Destruction of the House of M. Thiers—Detestation of M. Thiers by the Red Republicans of Paris—Monarchical Plot in Paris—Ferocity of the Versaillese—Palliating Circumstances—Triumphal Procession at Versailles—Scene in the National Assembly—Petulance of M. Thiers—Vote of Confidence in him—The Municipal Elections—Project for Holding a Congress of Municipal Representatives—Manifestoes of the Count de Chambord and of a Buonapartist—Dissensions among the Communal Leaders—Filthy Condition of Paris—State of the Tuileries—Demolition of the Napoleon Column—Intention and probable Effect of that Act—Order of the Day of Marshal MacMahon—Women's Clubs and Women's Rights—Further Changes in the Commune—Conclusion of the Formal Treaty of Peace with Germany—Speeches of Prince Bismarck, Thiers, and Jules Favre—The War a Thing of the Past.

THE Commune became more extreme in its manners, if not in its ideas, as it hurried blindly to the end. At the beginning of May it began to date its decrees according to the old Republican calendar of 1793. Thus, an announcement with reference to the property of M. Thiers was dated "Floréal 21, year 79;" and so with other documents, though the custom was not invariably followed. The attempt to purchase the favour of the poorer classes still continued; and, "after several days of laborious deliberation," as M. Vésinier relates, the Commune issued a decree, to the effect that all pledges in pawn prior to the 25th of April, under the sum of twenty francs, should be returned gratuitously from the 12th of May; that the articles would only be delivered up to the original ticket-holders, who would be required to prove their identity; and that the Delegate of Finance would come to an arrangement with the pawnbrokers concerning the settlement of the indemnity to be allowed them. Meanwhile, the vigorous dealing of the Commune with the newspapers suffered no abatement. Numerous journals were suppressed in the beginning of May, and, though the opposition still made itself audible, it was in direct defiance of the Hôtel de Ville. Decrees were issued, about the middle of the month, for the abolition of titles, coats of arms, liveries, aristocratic privileges, honorary distinctions, entailed estates, the Legion of Honour, and all other orders; and for giving to all acknowledged children, whether born in wedlock or not, the position and privileges of legitimate offspring, as well as for establishing secular marriages, and dispensing with all observances except the civil ceremony. The authorities likewise announced that religious instruction would soon disappear from the schools of Paris; that male and female teachers would be compelled to remove all crucifixes, Madonnas, and other symbols, the exhibition of which was an offence against liberty of conscience; and that every religious object in precious metals was to be sent to the Mint. In other respects the Commune pursued its desperate policy in the most unflinching manner. The Orphan Asylum of Belleville—a semi-religious establishment—was suppressed, without previous warning, and all property in the house was seized. Orders were given for demolishing the expiatory chapel of Louis XVI.; and, that the whole manhood of Paris might be pressed into the fighting service, should occasion require, no Frenchman was now allowed to leave the city, even though above forty years of age, and having a safe-conduct from the Prefecture of Police.

There was certainly no lack of proclamations on either side. M. Thiers, in particular, took frequent occasion for recommending his Government to the country, and denouncing the objects and measures of the Commune. On the 8th of May he issued a proclamation, addressed to the people of Paris, which he contrived to get posted up in the streets of the capital itself. This manifesto commenced with the assertion that France, having been freely consulted, had elected a government which was the only legal one—the only one which should command obedience, if universal suffrage were not a vain phrase. It is worthy of remark, by the way, that M. Thiers and his colleagues would never admit this plea when urged by the Empire as a proof of the validity of its own power. But times alter, and the ideas of men change with them. M. Thiers proceeded to say that the Government had given to the Parisians the same rights enjoyed by Lyons and Marseilles, Toulouse and Bordeaux; and that Paris could not, consistently with the principle of equality which it asserted, demand more rights than were possessed by the other cities of the country. A minority, however, had impudently endeavoured to impose its own will on France. Its works showed the nature of the rule to which it would subject the people. It had violated all property, imprisoned citizens in order to make hostages of them, turned into a desert the streets and public places where was installed the commerce of the world, suspended work, arrested prosperity, retarded the evacuation of

the country by the Germans, and exposed Paris to a fresh attack by the invaders, "which," added M. Thiers, "they declare they are ready to execute without mercy, if we do not ourselves put an end to the insurrection." There seems here to have been a considerable exaggeration of what the Prussians had really said on the subject. While not denying that circumstances might possibly arise which would necessitate an intervention on their part, they always regarded this as a remote and very undesirable contingency, and never—at least in public—uttered any threat of the positive and imminent character mentioned by M. Thiers. The most authentic statement on the subject was that of Prince Bismarck, who, speaking in the German Parliament some time before the issue of the French proclamation, said he shrank from the responsibility of advising the Emperor to meddle with the domestic concerns of France. Had they offered to intercede, he remarked, the contending parties would probably, in the French emotional way, have embraced each other, and then turned on the Germans. The Imperial Chancellor admitted that the interest of his countrymen in securing the payment of the indemnity was a strong temptation to take an active part in the establishment of a solid Government in France. They might have succeeded in such a task; but it would have caused great embarrassment and responsibilities. The Government, therefore, thought it better to abstain from all interference; though at the same time they must reserve to themselves the right of protecting their interests, should their just demands be ignored. This appears to have been the utmost degree in which the Prussians threatened an intervention.

The proclamation of M. Thiers went on to say that the Government had listened to all the delegations sent from Paris, but that none had offered conditions which would be other than a degradation of the national sovereignty. M. Thiers once more repeated his promise to continue subsidising necessitous workmen, and then proceeded:—"The Government wished that you might have been able to free yourselves from these tyrants, who are playing with your lives and liberties; but since you cannot do so, it undertakes the task, and it has assembled an army before your walls, not to conquer but to deliver you. Hitherto it has limited its attacks to the exterior works; but the moment has now come to attack the *enceinte* itself. The Government will not bombard Paris, as the Commune tells you. A bombardment threatens the entire city, renders it uninhabitable, and has for its object to intimidate citizens, and to force them to surrender. The Government will only use cannon to force in one of your gates, and will endeavour to limit to one point of attack the ravages of a war of which it is not the author." The loyal citizens of Paris were reminded that they were a hundred times more numerous than the partisans of the Commune, and that by rallying round the national flag, and "opening the gates," they might prevent the disasters of an assault. "When once those gates are open," said M. Thiers, "the sound of the cannon will cease; tranquillity, order, abundance, and peace will reappear within your walls. The Germans will evacuate our territory, and the traces of our misfortune will rapidly disappear. But if you do not act, the Government will be obliged to take the most energetic and certain means to deliver you. It owes thus much to you, but especially to France, because the idleness which is ruining you is extending, and will ruin her also. She has the right to save herself, if you do not know how to do so." The proclamation concluded with the observation that in a few days the Government troops would be in Paris, and that the Parisians should reflect on this, and assist in saving themselves by rendering the sword useless.

Exasperated by this appeal to the loyal Parisians to assist in the capture of the city by opening the gates, the Communal leaders determined on taking a signal revenge. They therefore, on the 11th of of May, issued an edict (that already alluded to as being dated "Floréal 21," &c.), setting forth that, in view of a placard printed at Versailles, posted on the walls of Paris by the orders of M. Thiers, and containing the assertion that his army was not bombarding Paris, while every day women and children were victims of the fratricidal projectiles from Versailles; considering also that in this placard M. Thiers had appealed to treachery, "feeling the absolute impossibility of vanquishing the heroic population of Paris, and of taking the city by other means;" the Committee of Public Safety decreed that the furniture belonging to M. Thiers should be seized by the administration of the domain, and that his house in the Place Georges should be pulled down. This house was filled with costly works of art—bronzes, pictures, enamels, medallions, porcelain, choice books and engravings, cabinets, and curious furniture. The walls in the study of M. Thiers were covered breast-high with book-shelves, and above these were several copies in water-colours of the great masterpieces of Italian painting; while scattered about the room were reproductions of the chief glories of Italian sculpture. The cowardly and contemptible piece of revenge now contemplated by the Commune was an act of barbarism worthy

of the Power which decreed it. But considerations of this nature had little weight with the spiteful incendiaries who had Paris by the throat, and whose virulence became more intense as the day of retribution grew nearer. The decree with respect to the property of M. Thiers was carried out in a few days. The house was sacked, and by the 16th of the month nothing was left standing but the outer walls. The disposition of the property was determined by a special decree, which ran :—

"In accordance with the decision of the Committee of Public Safety, the Citizen Jules Fontaine, Director-General of the Domains; in reply to the tears and threats of Thiers the bombarder, and to the laws passed by the Rural Assembly, his accomplice, decrees:

"Art. 1. All the linen belonging to the house of Thiers shall be placed at the disposal of the ambulances. 2. The works of art and valuable books shall be sent to the national libraries and museums. 3. The furniture shall be sold by auction, after public exhibition at the Garde Meuble. 4. The proceeds of this sale shall be exclusively devoted to the pensions and indemnities that may be granted to the widows and orphans of the infamous war carried on against us by the ex-proprietor of the Hotel St. Georges. 5. The same application will be made of the amount received for the materials of demolition. 6. Upon the site of the parricide's house a public square will be established."

The detestation of M. Thiers felt by the ultra-Republicans of Paris was extreme; and no wonder. He had refused to be intimidated by their menaces; he had laid a firm hand on the criminals who were devastating the capital and imperilling the very existence of the country; and he was making his power felt so effectually, that by the middle of May there could no longer be the slightest doubt as to how the bloody experiment of the Commune would end. This it was which made the insurgents and their followers so bitter against the Chief of the Executive Power. They saw that he was winning in the deadly game they had themselves originated; and they worked as much injury and heaped as much insult on him as their fleeting opportunities permitted. The streets of Paris were filled at this time with caricatures of M. Thiers, and every scandal which could be raked up against him was circulated with eager delight. It is evident that the Communal leaders dreaded his influence more than they ventured openly to confess. They feared that some persons might really be found to facilitate the entrance of the Government troops into the city, according to the suggestion of M. Thiers in his proclamation. The Committee of Public Safety published an address to the citizens on the 12th of May, which alleged that the Commune and the Republic had just escaped a mortal danger. Treason, it was here said, had slipped into the Communal ranks; gold had been distributed with open hand, and had found some who were capable of being bought. "The abandonment of Issy, announced in an impious placard by the miserable wretch who surrendered it," continued the proclamation, "was only the first act in the drama of an internal monarchical insurrection; the surrender of one of the gates of the city was to follow. All the threads of this dark conspiracy are in our hands; most of the guilty men have been arrested, and their punishment will be exemplary. A court-martial is sitting permanently, and justice will be done." There is a want of clearness in the above allusion to "the miserable wretch" who had acted so traitorously to the Commune. The abandonment of Issy was by the orders of the Commandant; the "impious placard" announcing it was put forward by Rossel, who was strongly opposed to the relinquishing of the fort. The two persons, however, are here confounded. If the Committee of Public Safety meant to insinuate that Rossel was engaged in "an internal monarchical insurrection," the imputation seems to be baseless and unjust. Yet that Rossel was really accused of a traitorous surrendering of Fort Issy appears from his "Posthumous Papers."

The ferocity of the conflict increased with its prolongation. If the Versailles Government ever felt any doubt as to the reliability of the regular army, that doubt was by this time completely dispelled. The officers were now anxious, not to prevent fraternisation with the rebels, but to check the savage animosity of the troops towards the National Guards of the Commune. "No quarter!" was the cry raised by the regiments employed in the reduction of Paris; and the cry was no vain utterance. A correspondent of the *Times* was told by persons who had been recently stopping at Versailles that the soldiers stationed there constantly spoke of Paris as if it were some nest of abomination, of which the earth should be purged by fire and sword; and that, so far from shrinking from the consequences of extreme measures, they declared that until Paris, that den of revolution-mongers, was destroyed, or reduced to insignificance, France could have no peace or security. However regrettable and reprehensible this view may have been (and there can be no doubt it was both), the feeling was so natural under the circumstances that it is impossible to experience any surprise at its having been entertained. For some generations, Paris had again and again, at intervals of but few years, plunged the whole of France into the

turmoil of revolutionary disturbances, with the almost avowed object of making the capital predominant, and of setting at naught the views and wishes of the provinces. It had forced the Imperial Government into the fatal war with Prussia by its taunts, its jealousies, its threatenings, and its frantic shouts; and had then shattered that Government, to which the vast majority of the nation had recently given a renewed adhesion—had shattered it in the moment of its weakness, because it had failed, owing mainly to the peevish opposition of these very Parisians to the necessary measures of preparation for a war so onerous and so gigantic. Finally, the Germans had hardly departed from the city they had humbled when Paris again raised the flag of insurrection, challenged the provinces to a deadly duel, committed and justified the most extreme atrocities, outraged with a certain savage gleefulness every principle and observance which Frenchmen generally hold in respect, and openly declared that it would prevail, or perish in universal conflagration and ruin. Can we wonder that a nation thus repeatedly provoked, insulted, and defied, and now once more attacked under circumstances the most bitter and distressing conceivable, should lose all self-control, and meet atrocity with atrocity, and hate with hate? Ought we not to make some allowances for an army and a people so tried? and is it not common fairness, in determining the relative amount of guilt of all concerned, to consider who was the actual aggressor in this devil's contest?

But to make allowance is one thing; to justify another. Many subsequent acts of the Versailles troops were quite unjustifiable. They were inspired by an undiscriminating fury of revenge, which doubtless reacted on the feelings of the Communists, and furnished them, in their turn, with some palliation for their own evil deeds. The policy of the regular troops was to kill as many of the Communal Guards as they could. On one occasion they bayoneted 300 of the insurgents whom they found in a drunken sleep, and who, it is said, might have been made prisoners with perfect ease. At the taking of the Clamart railway station, a young officer, of a superior grade, was captured. The Versailles general in command was asked what should be done with him; to which he replied, "No quarter can be given to the leaders. Take him away, and have him shot." The rebel marched in custody a few hundred yards along a road, and then suddenly exclaimed, "Here is a wall which will just suit me." The soldiers took him at his word; placed him with his back against the wall, and despatched him with fifteen bullets. Many such scenes occurred, and it is certain that the Communal threat of reprisals rather provoked than prevented them.

This feeling of relentless animosity towards the Communists was largely shared by the civilian population of Versailles. The prisoners were hissed, hooted at, reviled, and often struck as they were taken through the streets; and the Versaillese witnessed with great favour a sort of triumph which the army had the bad taste to celebrate in front of the lodgings of M. Thiers. Delegates from the various regiments marched through the streets with the insurgent flags and cannon captured at Issy. The instruments of the drummers and trumpeters were decorated with laurel-wreaths; some of the soldiers bore in the muzzles of their muskets the red ensigns of the enemy; and the procession was closed by a number of mounted artillerymen escorting twenty-eight cannon and four mitrailleuses, taken from the Communists, and now bedizened with green leaves. Truly, a miserable triumph, yet one which seems to have given a species of satisfaction to the Versaillese. The soldiers were received at the Prefecture by M. Thiers, who, accompanied by Marshal MacMahon, came out into the open air, took off his hat, and congratulated the troops, amidst loud cries of "Long live France!" from the vast crowd which had assembled. The military deputation then proceeded to the Court of Louis XVI., in front of the palace, where M. de Malleville, one of the deputies, thanked the army in the name of the Assembly and of the country.

Notwithstanding these successes, M. Thiers was at times a good deal worried by the criticisms of members of the Assembly; and on such occasions he exhibited that petulance which was one of his characteristics. A scene of this kind occurred on the 11th of May. A deputy having obtained from the Minister of Justice an assurance that in due time those persons who had been pillaging churches, &c., in Paris, should be brought to justice, M. Mortimer-Ternoux, a member of the Right, called on the Chief of the Executive to reconcile that reply with an assurance which he had himself given that the gates of Paris would be left open to enable such citizens (excepting the ringleaders) as felt themselves compromised to get out of harm's way. On hearing this demand made on him, M. Thiers ran passionately into the tribune, and, without answering the question, said:—"While I am devoting myself to the service of my country with evident disinterestedness, you will permit me to express my astonishment at meeting in this place with annoyances. When a man has done all that he possibly can do, what must he think at



THE EMPEROR VISITING HIS WOUNDED SOLDIERS.

seeing your ingratitude? I am devoting the last days of my life to the public service. My task must not be rendered impossible of execution. I call upon the Assembly to decide; on such conditions I cannot govern. A vote with an explanatory resolution is necessary. My resignation is ready. By weakening me, you weaken yourselves. The present state of affairs requires complete frankess. If I receive such treatment, I cannot continue to perform my functions. You are imprudent men; you are too impatient. Another



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week is necessary; in another eight days there will be no danger." When M. Thiers spoke of "annoyances," a storm of contrary feelings burst forth, the Left applauding, and the Right expressing vehement dissatisfaction. The President of the Chamber endeavoured to still the clamour by ringing his bell, but in vain. M. Mortimer-Ternoux repudiated any intention of attacking M. Thiers; but the Chief of the Executive said that, after what had occurred, a formal vote of confidence should be passed, so that France might feel assured that her destinies were intrusted to the hands of one who could reckon on the support of her Representative Assembly. Three resolutions in this sense were then drawn up by different deputies, and M. Thiers—who seems to some extent to have acted as judge in his own case—showed a preference for the one proposed by a M. Bethmont, which in effect declared that the then head of the State was the man of all others to save France. This was ultimately carried by 495 votes against 9. Before the result had been arrived at, M. Kerdel observed that M. Thiers was too sensitive—which could hardly be questioned. He appealed to him to forget what had just passed, and to set an example of concord. M. Thiers gave M. Kerdèl credit for sincerity, but said that a vote was indispensable, adding—"I have the courage to maintain my devotion to my country: let those who attack me have also the courage of their acts." This was one of those neat little French epigrams which sound so clever, and mean so little. But Frenchmen are always pleased with an epigram; and so the storm was lulled, and the House, almost unanimously, expressed its confidence in M. Thiers.

The municipal elections, held in the early part of May all over France, were not a source of unmixed satisfaction to the Government; for, although they gave a majority of members professing adhesion to the Republic, the views of some of these Repub-

licans were far more extreme than those of the existing Administration, and it was suspected that in other instances the political colour of the day had been adopted as a means of concealing Buonapartism. There were also several more or less openly-avowed Communists among the councillors. It was shortly proposed to hold a congress of these municipal representatives at Bordeaux. This project so alarmed the Ministers that they revived against it a law of the Empire, passed in 1855, which prohibited all common action amongst either the Municipal Councils or the Provincial Assemblies—a law reasonable enough in itself, because the object of all such assemblies is to discuss local questions, and, if they were allowed to federate in a species of convention, a rival to the National Parliament would be set up, and a very disastrous state of conflict might supervene. In the present instance, however, the appeal to the Imperial law was unfortunate, because it was made by those who had bitterly opposed the Empire for all such measures, and because, in the existing state of chaos, an exception to the rule might well have been allowed. The design of the proposed Bordeaux Congress was to consult as to the possibility of mediation between Paris and Versailles. The jealousy of the Government seemed to indicate a fear lest the decision of the Congress should be more in favour of the insurgents than of M. Thiers and his coadjutors; and the Commune showed some tact in offering the Luxembourg as a place of meeting for the municipal delegates, if the Government should by force prevent their assembling at Bordeaux. Nothing of the kind took place, for the fall of the Commune was now imminent, and the possibility of conciliation passed into the limbo of abortive projects.

The unsettled state of the country again brought forward the Count de Chambord, with his mediæval ideas of government, and his amiable enthusiasm for humanity and divine right. In a manifesto published in the *Gaulois* of May 12th, he denied as a calumny an assertion that he had been led to despair of his country. But he asserted that there could be no order, no justice, no honesty, apart from the old traditional Monarchy of which he was the representative. "The abandonment of true principles," he observed, in a safe and undeniable generalisation, "is the cause of France's disasters." Thence he deduced the more particular and to some more disputable assertion, that the good sense of the country demanded a Monarchy—that is to say, the Monarchy of Henry V. He denied that he wished unlimited power, and said he desired to preside over the destinies of France while submitting the acts of his Government seriously to the control of representatives elected by the people. He repudiated the idea that traditional Monarchy was incompatible with the equality of all before the law, and said he would demand efficacious guarantees for the independence of the Papacy, adding, "The liberty of the Church is the first condition of peace in the public mind, and of order throughout the world." He did not wish to reign by a party, but would accept the loyal co-operation of all, and would restore to the country religion, concord, and peace. All this was very obliging, but it was obvious that France did not desire to be so obliged.

Another singular manifesto of the time was one in favour of the Emperor Napoleon. A letter, signed "Louis Duchêne," and addressed to the French peasantry, was circulated among the villages in various parts of France. The writer said he was not an author, or a man with a school education, but the son of a peasant who had enriched himself by his industry, who owed nothing to any one, and required nothing from any one. He (the writer) would have been indifferent to the form of Government prevailing in France, had he not loved his country so much, and especially its peasantry. The letter then proceeded to argue that the only means of creating a Government in France which could restore prosperity was by a *plebiscitum*, based on universal suffrage. "But," added the writer, "such a Government must not be the Government of Thiers, who called the people 'the vile multitude;' nor of Favre, who said of them in the tribune, 'the imbecile population of the country;' nor of Gambetta, who accused the peasants of lukewarmness at a time when they were dying for their country. . . . . It can only be the Government created by an instinct suggested to the peasantry by Providence —that of the much-calumniated Emperor Louis Napoleon, who has said that his friends 'do not live in palaces and castles, but in village huts.'" This manifesto had as little effect as that of the Count de Chambord; but there cannot be a question that, as the writer pointed out, no one surpasses your model Republican in virulent depreciation of the people, whom he generally traduces in proportion as he flatters and exalts the mob.

In face of the many dangers which confronted them, the chiefs of the Commune should have striven to the utmost after union and practical skill, as the only means of staving off the worst, if that was possible at all. But their divisions became greater and more serious with every week; their resources diminished when they had the most

need of them; and their habit of talking increased with the opportunity of indulging it. The scarcity of troops was a most alarming feature of the time. At the beginning of the insurrection, Cluseret had promised the Commune an army of 100,000 fighting men, who were to keep the field, while as many more did duty in the city. But Rossel, just before his resignation, could only obtain a promise of 12,000 men for a grand attack on the enemy; and, of this small and very inadequate force, not nearly the whole was in reality forthcoming. The situation was indeed desperate. Rochefort declared in his paper that what was wanted was a dictator. "It is for the Commune," he said, "to find its man; and all the advice we can give is, that it has not a day to lose." The *Journal de Paris*—an opposition paper—bearded the Commune in the boldest style for its incapacity, its helplessness, its hesitation, and the utter collapse of all its fine promises; and, strange to say, the publication was not suppressed in consequence. "The Commune," it remarked, "goes on discussing, deliberating, proclaiming, and placarding, and has only strength enough left to tear itself to pieces, while the cannon of the Government is knocking its forts and bastions about its ears. And what, in fact, have you done, Commune and Central Committee, in the two months that have elapsed since the 18th of March? You announced yourselves as a revolution which was to walk over all our heads, and change the face of the world! And yet you have done nothing—nothing that is worth anything. You have suppressed newspapers, and yet those very newspapers exist and oppose you. You have decreed the demolition of the Vendôme Column, and yet the Vendôme Column still stands. You prohibited the bakers from working at night, and yet there is plenty of hot bread every morning. You have neither been able to create anything nor to destroy anything; and the reason is because you are nothing yourselves—nothing but impotence and contradiction. You pretend to correct the whole world, and you cannot correct your own faults; you announced your intention to save France, and you cannot even save yourselves." The sting of these remarks consisted in their truthfulness. The brutality of the Communists was equalled by their utter want of business capacity, even for carrying out their own ideas. A more wretched exhibition of incompetency for the work of Government has never been presented; and it was only the disruption of France, consequent on a disastrous war, which gave the experiment a temporary success.

The Commune could not even maintain the sanitary police of the city. Paris, which for several years had been remarkable for cleanliness and good order, now reeked with abominations. The habits of the troops were in the highest degree filthy and revolting. Many of the principal streets had been converted into markets, chiefly for the sale of vegetables; and there was no one to clear away the refuse. People feared that if the rule of this fantastic power should, by any singular possibility, last to the dog-days, a pestilence would be the result of so much fermenting dirt. A correspondent of the *Echo* described the debased, disgusting, and wretched appearance of the Tuileries. He entered by what was known as the Pavillon de l'Horloge, which was the grand entry from the garden side of the palace. "Federal Guards," he recorded, "were drinking, smoking, and snoring in the hall. A couple of decidedly unclean Bellevillites were stationed at the foot of the staircase to keep the crowd in order, while others lounged against the Corinthian columns and on the gilt bronze balustrade. Up the stairs on the left brought me to the money-taker's, who had placed his *bureau* in the antechamber of the chapel. Strange to say, his table was not covered with patriotic red baize, but sober green. The price of admission was half a franc for adults, and a quarter for infants. The proceeds, we were told, were for the benefit of the widows and orphans of the Commune. I paid my money, and passed between another brace of sentinels into the private chapel of the Tuileries. The candles stood on the altar as usual, though of course unlit. Everybody was covered—not a soul had taken off his hat." From the throne-room the throne had been removed, and, in the tapestry representing the Palais Royal, the word "royal" had been changed into "national." The rooms on the ground floor were turned into barracks. Dirty mattresses were strewed about in all directions. Bottles of strong liquor were ranged round the pedestal of the statue of Minerva in the hall on that side of the building. Some of the Communal Guards were smoking, drinking, and playing at cards, round long wooden tables made of planks, while others lay about drunk and heavily sleeping. The air of the place was foul, and everything betokened vulgarity, debauchery, and squalor.

The destruction or injury of beautiful and historically interesting structures was among the chief pleasures of the men of the Commune. Their greatest exploit in this respect was the demolition of the famous Napoleon Column in the Place Vendôme. As already related, it was resolved, on the 13th of April, to pull down the pillar erected in memory of the Grand Army and its achieve-

ments. After several delays and postponements, owing chiefly to the engineering difficulties attending on the desire to make the vast monument fall instantaneously, the act of destruction was effected on the 16th of May. The column had been partly undermined at the base, and a number of ropes, worked by machinery on the Place, were wound about it. A bed of sand, faggots, and manure was prepared for the huge mass to fall upon, that the concussion to the surrounding buildings might be lessened. Great fears were nevertheless entertained by persons living in the neighbourhood, lest the descent of so many tons of materials should produce damaging and alarming effects; but the result proved that those fears, however natural, were exaggerated. The motives which determined the Commune to shatter the column at one stroke were probably twofold. It was doubtless perceived by the revolutionary leaders that their power had not the faintest chance of lasting long enough to admit of the slow process of a gradual demolition; and there was something theatrical and impressive in causing this towering monument to disappear at a word of command. Accordingly, the *Official Journal*, on the morning of the 16th, announced that the column would positively fall that day at two o'clock in the afternoon. At the hour named, a large crowd of spectators assembled. The members of the Commune and their Staff, amounting to 200, attended on horseback. Bands played, and everything was done to give the occasion a festive character. At a quarter past three, the first attempt was made to pull the column down; but it failed, owing to the breaking of a snatch-block. The ropes slackened suddenly, and two men were injured. Some time was lost in repairing the machinery; fresh ropes were added, and Colonel Mayer, commanding in the Place Vendôme, ascended to the top of the column, and waved a small tricolour flag. He then tore the flag, cried "Long live the Commune!" tied the flag-head to the rails at the summit of the pillar, and descended. When the ropes were tightened for the second time, the bands struck up the "Marseillaise," and all eyes were fixed on the doomed monument. This time the attempt was successful. "It falls!" exclaimed the on-lookers, and, a little before six o'clock, the great mass bowed slowly towards the Rue de la Paix. As it fell, it broke up into pieces in the air, and struck the ground in about four portions. A loud yet dull report followed, and clouds of dust rose into the sky; but the concussion was nothing like so bad as most people had expected. The column forced itself some way into the ground; but no windows were broken, nor was the square in any way injured. As soon as the huge fragments had settled themselves, Colonel Mayer mounted the empty pedestal, and frantically waved a red flag. Another member of the Commune delivered an oration appropriate to the occasion, which consisted of a trenchant attack on the character and acts of the first Napoleon. The crowd made a rush at the fragments, and endeavoured to pick up pieces as relics; but this was forbidden, and people were searched before leaving the square. A Versailles despatch, issued shortly afterwards, announced, with a brevity which had something impressive about it, that, according to a telegram received from Mont Valérien, "the top of the Vendôme column had disappeared from the horizon."

Thus fell this great monument of an age of conquest—a monument which it was hoped would stand for centuries, to incite successive generations of Frenchmen to emulation of the exploits it blazoned. If the destruction of the column could have ensured, or in any degree have hastened, the passing away of that spirit of military aggression out of which it arose, and which it was designed to commemorate, the loss of a striking work of art would have weighed but little against the good effected by its sacrifice. But of this there was not the slightest prospect. The Napoleon column was only the outward expression of a tendency in the French nature which it would require much more than the demolition of a piece of masonry to remove. Even if the Communists were sincere in their professed abhorrence of this tendency, they were only a small minority; but it is very doubtful if they *were* sincere—at least, in any sense beyond the superficial impulse of the moment. Had they been successful, and established their power over the whole of France, it can hardly be doubted that they would have plunged into the old crusading zeal on behalf of the Universal Republic. Thence would have arisen military dictatorships, and a diseased appetite for conquest, pampered by successes, or exasperated by defeats. Such was the course of events arising out of the first Red Republic; such would probably have been the deadly growth of the second, had it lived to produce its natural fruits. The arbitrary destruction of the Vendôme column, by the decree of a minority, was much more likely to kindle the military spirit than to quench it, because any outrage on a national sentiment, whether just or unjust, is pretty certain to provoke reaction. The monument has since been restored, and now presents just the same appearance as formerly. Its fall was not a symbol of the death of Napoleonism; it was rather an

omen of the dissolution of the Commune, then close at hand.

An order of the day by Marshal MacMahon, issued at Versailles on the 19th of May, announced the destruction of the column, and continued :— "The foreigner respected it; the Commune of Paris has overthrown it. Men calling themselves Frenchmen have dared to destroy, under the eyes of the Germans who saw the deed, this witness of the victories of our fathers against Europe in coalition. The Commune hoped thus to efface the memory of the military virtues of which the column was the glorious symbol. Soldiers! if the recollections which the column commemorated are no longer graven upon brass, they will remain in our hearts. Inspired by them, we know how to give France another proof of bravery, devotion, and patriotism." It is not improbable that the unsparing rigour with which the army put down the Commune, when at last brought face to face with it, was intensified by the desire to avenge so gratuitous an insult to the military class.

The prevalent atmosphere of excitement had its usual effect of stimulating several women into a state of revolutionary frenzy. The ultra-Republican papers contained a number of short notifications, announcing that places of meeting would presently be established, where "citizenesses" might assemble, and give utterance to their views on public affairs. In the early part of May, the project was carried into effect. Certain women made a circuit of the different arrondissements, and invited their sisters to join them in the great cause. A writer in the *Times* contrived to attend one of these gatherings, which took place in a kind of outhouse situated on the Boulevard d'Italie, in the lowest quarter of Paris. The room, which was filthy and offensive in every respect, was crowded with women and children of all ages, and for the most part belonging to the poorest orders of society. At the end of the room was a table covered with papers and books, and behind it sat a row of women, each with a red scarf and a red belt. The meeting was being addressed by a fine-looking young woman, with streaming black hair and flashing eyes, who exclaimed, amidst the approving ejaculations of the auditory :—"Men are idle; they call themselves the masters of creation, and are a set of dolts. They complain of being made to fight, and are always grumbling over their woes: let them go and join the craven band at Versailles, and we will defend the city ourselves. We have petroleum, and we have hatchets and strong hearts, and are as capable of bearing fatigue as they. We will man the barricades, and show them that we will be no longer trodden down by them. Such as still wish to fight may do so side by side with us. Women of Paris, to the front!" The phrase, "We have petroleum," was a foreshadowing of what was shortly to be done by some of the Parisian women in the crisis of the final days. This speaker was succeeded by one who attacked the priesthood, and mimicked, to the great delight of the onlookers, the actions used at mass. One of the auditory denounced the priesthood as "a rabble;" and all were delighted with whatever was said or done to their discredit. The "citizeness" movement, however, did not succeed as much as might have been expected. Even the most extreme Republicans seemed, with but few exceptions, to be somewhat jealous of these rival claims. At another club-meeting, a young soldier proposed that the persons then present should at once vote that women ought to be elected members of the Commune. The suggestion was highly applauded by the female portion of the audience; but the men resented it, as not worthy of serious consideration; and an elderly sage made a speech, in which he reminded the women that the proper sphere of their duties was at home—a rebuke which was strongly supported by all the men. The "citizenesses" had taken too literally the appeals addressed to them to come forward and support the Commune. They might organise Amazonian regiments, and were useful, and sometimes ornamental, as *vivandières;* but political privileges were another matter.

The Committee of Public Safety soon proved to be as great a failure as any of the other executive bodies to which the Commune deputed its powers. A secret sitting of the Commune was held on the night of May 9th, at which it was decided to insist upon the resignation of the actual members of the Committee, in order that they might be immediately replaced. It was also resolved to appoint a civil delegate to the War Department, who would be supported by the sitting Military Committee. The Commune was thenceforth to meet only three times a week as a deliberating assembly, except in cases of emergency, when it might be called together on the proposal of five members, or at the suggestion of the Public Safety Committee, sitting permanently at the Hôtel de Ville. On the previous evening there had been a hot discussion with respect to the rival powers of the Commune, the Central Committee, and the Committee of Public Safety; and a great deal of mutual objurgation had been indulged in. The *Père Duchesne* of the 9th published Colonel Rossel's letter of resignation, together with angry criticisms on the action of the

Central Committee, and with a recommendation that an appeal should be made to the people. As if there were not already Committees enough and to spare, the Central Committee of the National Guard appointed yet another, which was called a Committee of Organisation. This new body at once proceeded to issue a proclamation, announcing that it had received powers for the better carrying on of the war. The members of the Committee said they were determined to enforce the rigorous measures which had been decreed, and by which every one was strictly forbidden to make any attempt at evading his share in the defence of the city. They professed a firm resolve to overcome the ill-will and petty opposition which they encountered; and they promised to give an irresistible impetus to the defence of Paris. The *Réveil* of May 10th advised the constitution of a committee of control, to consist of three members, viz., Arnauld, Delescluze, and Protot; and it also recommended that the Central Committee should be absolutely forbidden to interfere in the administration of affairs. Such was the hopeless state of disorganisation into which the Commune had fallen in the concluding days of its existence.

In the midst of so much domestic discord, it was a relief to find all danger of foreign complications removed by the conclusion of the formal treaty of peace between France and Germany, which was signed on the 11th of May. Prince Bismarck and Count Arnim had previously met M. Jules Favre and M. Pouyer-Quertier at Frankfort, when various modifications of the preliminary treaty were discussed. On the 12th, the Imperial German Chancellor made a communication to Parliament, in which he said:—

"On the conclusion of the preliminaries of peace hopes were entertained that the labours of the Conference which assembled to settle the final terms of the treaty would be terminated in a month or six weeks. This expectation was founded on the belief that the French Government would enjoy undisputed authority in France; but the hope was not realised. A longer delay in the conclusion of a definite peace would have given rise to a fear as to whether the French Government would remain in a position to fulfil its obligations. As regards the cession of territory, the object at stake was already in our hands, and there could be no doubt of the arrangements in this respect being carried out. The apprehensions that were entertained concerned the question whether the Government would be inclined and able to accomplish the conditions relating to the war-contributions. Serious anxiety upon this point induced me to try the effect of a personal interview with the French Ministers. If we had not come to an agreement, the German army would have occupied Paris, either by an arrangement with the Commune, or by force, and thereupon we should have required the French Government to withdraw its troops behind the Loire, and then resume negotiations. I only went to Frankfort with the intention of obtaining the settlement of a few pending questions—namely, the payment of the war-contributions, the shortening of the delays, and the strengthening of the guarantee. But as it became manifest that a prospect existed of finally concluding peace, I considered that that result would be a gain for both countries, as Germany would thereby be able to lessen her military burthens, and France would achieve consolidation. The French Government is in the best possible position to meet the views of the people of France for a restoration of peace. Any other Government that might attempt to take its place would be suspected of not wishing to make peace equally secure. It is true there will be some supplementary provisions necessary respecting the carrying out of the treaty; still, a definite peace is now achieved. The terms for the payment of the war-indemnity have been shortened; the first half milliard will be delivered within the thirty days following the occupation of Paris by the Versailles army. With regard to the mode of payment, it has been settled that only specie or notes of safe banks, either English, Dutch, Prussian, or Belgian, will be accepted, or first-class bills. The second payment, amounting to one thousand millions, is to be made in the course of this year, namely, by the end of December. Not till then are we bound to evacuate the forts before Paris. The fourth half milliard has to be paid by the 1st of May next year (1872). With reference to the payment of the last three milliards, the stipulations of the preliminaries of the Treaty of Peace will be adhered to, and the payments will be concluded by the 1st of March, 1874. The French Government hopes to be able to satisfy our requirements. Difficulties arose in connection with the question of our commercial relations. The French Government wishes to abrogate the Treaty of Commerce, and appears to expect to obtain by that proceeding an increase of customs receipts. I contented myself with obtaining for us the rights accorded to the most favoured nations. By the most favoured nations we understand England, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria, and Russia. With regard to the frontier question, it was decided not to understand 'the rayon of Belfort' in its technical significance, but to extend it by four or five kilomètres. It appeared desirable to acquire some German Communes near Thionville, together with Rellinger. This the French Government declared itself unable to grant. I therefore proposed to leave the question of ratification to the National Assembly, and I offered in lieu of that territory a further cession of country round Belfort. We have acquired for a certain sum of money the portion of railway in Alsace and Lorraine which belongs to the Eastern of France Company. A delay of ten days—namely, till the 20th of May—has been agreed upon for the ratification of the treaty by the Emperor of Germany and the French National Assembly."



A SHELL FROM A VERSAILLESE BATTERY.

With regard to the probabilities of the future, Prince Bismarck could only say, in conclusion, that he entertained a hope that Germany would not "for a long time" be obliged to make use of the guarantees she had retained, to secure herself against renewed aggression.

M. Thiers, in announcing the news to the Versailles Assembly on the 11th, said he wished he could state that the conditions laid down by the preliminaries had been rendered less onerous by the treaty. But the position of France did not allow of the Government obtaining so much. Nevertheless, the serious complications which at one time seemed likely to arise, as a consequence of the civil war, had been cleared away. All Frenchmen would be restored to France, which would again possess a large, glorious, and brave army—a very important thing, considering the disturbed state of Algeria.* In the sitting of the 13th, M. Jules Favre presented the Treaty of Peace, which he moved should be referred to the bureaux for examination. He alluded to the evil effects on the negotiations produced by the Communal rising, and continued:—

"Doubts were expressed as to our power to conduct our own affairs, and to restore the authority of the law. Even the final conclusion of peace had become doubtful; but we have succeeded in removing Prince Bismarck's distrust, and in convincing him that France, having signed the treaty, was resolved to carry out all its provisions. The plenipotentiaries felt that in the interest of both countries it was necessary that the treaty should be concluded. Unfortunately, we were not able to shake off the heavy chains with which the Parisian insurrection bound us down. The insurgents are responsible for having rendered the position of the country worse than it was before. They have compelled the Germans to continue their occupation of the forts; but we shall speedily restore order by force, and will hesitate before no measures which may be rendered necessary by the conduct of the insurgents. With regard to the other clauses of the treaty, they are the same as in the preliminaries. The second part of the war-indemnity will be paid in three years; we have hastened the time for paying the first part in order to free the country sooner from occupation by the Germans. The purchase of the railways for three hundred and twenty-five million francs will be taken into account in the first two milliards which we have to pay. The clauses concerning the treaty of commerce will, I trust, meet with careful consideration on your part. The Ministers will prove to you that we have obtained all that was possible. We have acquired a circle of eight kilomètres round Belfort. Germany proposes to cede us the whole arrondissement of Belfort in return for some territory which constitutes our frontier line in the direction of Luxemburg. You will have to consider this proposal."

M. Favre then read the text of the treaty, and, after further remarks and explanations (including a statement that the Germans who had been expelled from France would be restored to the possession of their property, and to the right of domicile on French territory), he requested the Assembly to vote urgency for the consideration of the whole matter; which was agreed to. The Assembly discussed the new terms on the 18th of May, and, at the close of the debate, the treaty was approved by the general consent of the House. However painful and onerous some of the stipulations may have been, it was felt that there was no choice but to accept them. France was heartily desirous of turning her back on the war, and regarding it as a thing of the past. Certain consequences of the struggle had yet to be faced; but it was well to know that they had now been exactly defined and estimated. The war of July, 1870, had been endured and outlived. It had already lapsed into history; and Frenchmen, relieved from anxiety on that ground, turned their minds to thoughts of reparation, and (perhaps) of revenge.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Communal Rising at Lyons—Appeal of Paris to the Provinces for Assistance—Desperate Condition of the Commune—Explosion of a Cartridge Factory—Action of the Central Committee—More Suppression of Papers—Determination to put the Hostage Decree in Force—Doubtful Stories of Atrocity—The Continuance of the Struggle hopeless—M. Vésinier's Testimony on this Point—Parisian Street Fighting—The Making of Barricades—Letter of Cluseret—Release of that Officer—System of Internal Defence—Opinion of Rossel on the Barricade System of Defence—The Barricades badly Manned—Capture of Fort Vanvres by the Versaillese—Escape of Insurgents through the Catacombs—The Railway Station at Clamart—Taking of the Village of Issy—Progress of the Siege—Flight and Capture of Rochefort—Atrocities of Raoul Rigault and his Assistant, Dacosta—Ferocious Treatment of the Clergy—Protest against the Dictation of the Committee of Public Safety—Predominance in Military Affairs of the Central Committee of the National Guard—Distrust and Alarm in Paris—Decrees of the Commune—Final Attempts at Conciliation.

As the only hope of successful resistance for Paris during the war with Germany lay in the arrival of succour from the provinces, so now the last chance for the Commune was in the possibility of the

* There was at that time a rising of Arab chieftains, which for a while threatened serious consequences.

large towns all over France supporting its cause, not only by words, but by active measures. Some movements of this nature were really made, and several of the cities known for their revolutionary tendencies were for a time greatly agitated. Marseilles established a Communal Government early in April, which, as we have seen, was put down in blood. Lyons made a similar attempt about a month later, and very severe fighting occurred on the 30th of April and the 1st of May. The Red Republican party issued a proclamation on the former of those days, in which it was set forth that "the traitors of Versailles" were endeavouring to impose themselves on the country as a constituent Government, serving as a ladder to Royalty; that the population of Lyons, wishing to see how far the audacity of these traitors would lead them, had previously refrained from resistance, but that now their patience was at an end, and they could "no longer suffer a factious Assembly to wave in France the flag of civil war;" that, consequently, "the revolutionists of Lyons" had named a temporary Commune; that proper elections would shortly be held; but that, in the meanwhile, the members of the temporary Commune were "resolved, rather than see victory taken from them, to convert into a mass of ruins a town sufficiently cowardly to allow Paris and the Republic to be assassinated." This favourite threat of wholesale destruction is highly characteristic of the Red Republic, though it was only Paris which had either the courage or the wickedness to carry the vengeful menace into execution. The Lyons revolutionists, when attacked by the troops, refrained from laying the town in ruins, perhaps from want of means; but they fought with great constancy behind their barricades during portions of two days, and lost a good many in killed and wounded. The rising was at length quelled; but the state of the city was such that it was found necessary to disarm the National Guards, and to summon reinforcements of troops from Marseilles.

The occurrence of risings such as this inspired the Parisian insurgents from time to time with momentary anticipations of a great national movement in aid of the Commune. But, as May advanced, and it became evident that the provincial cities either would not or could not do anything effectual for the rescue of Paris, the leading men of the revolution began to despond. An appeal to the provinces put forth by Paschal Grousset, and dated May 15th, was little else than a plea for compassion. Addressing the great towns, the Minister asked:—"Will you wait until Paris is transformed into a cemetery, and all its houses into tombs? Great towns, you have sent her your fraternal adhesion; you have said in all sincerity, 'I am with you.' Great towns, it is no longer time now for manifestoes; it is time for acts when the cannon roars. Enough of Platonic sympathies. You have muskets and ammunition. To arms! Towns of France, Paris regards you! Paris waits for you to encircle the cowardly bombarders, and prevent them from escaping the punishment she reserves for them. Paris will do her duty to the very last; but do not forget, Lyons, Marseilles, Lille, Toulouse, Nantes, Bordeaux, and the rest—do not forget that if Paris succumbs for the liberty of the world, avenging history will have the right to say that Paris has been murdered because you have allowed her assassination to be accomplished." There was certainly much more of despair than of hope in this appeal; and its author could scarcely have believed that it would meet with any response. It is a noteworthy circumstance that the document should have come from the Delegate for Foreign Affairs. The division between Paris and France could hardly have been more strikingly marked.

Even had the provinces been disposed to take concerted action on behalf of the Commune, it was now too late. The days of the Red Republic were numbered. The end was rapidly approaching Marshal MacMahon had got a firm grip on the rebellious capital, and the Communal forces were every day becoming more inadequate to the task of resistance. Position after position was lost, and the investing army contracted its folds about the city. Meudon, Sèvres, Rueil, Courbevoie, Bécon, Asnières, Les Moulineaux, and Le Moulin-Saquet, had been successively carried; Issy had fallen; and many prisoners and guns were in the hands of the conquerors. Dissension reigned within the unhappy city; and on the 17th an incident occurred which spread dismay far and wide. The Rapp cartridge-factory, near the Champs de Mars, exploded with a terrific noise, which was heard all over Paris. The Communists of course said that it was purposely blown up by agents of Versailles; and what gave a certain probability to this allegation was the fact that the workpeople, who generally left the place at six, quitted that evening at five, as if they had some reason for supposing that a catastrophe was about to happen. The explosion occurred at a quarter to six, at which time there were still some persons remaining in the building. These of course were killed, and, as the projectiles in the factory were hurled about in all directions, many people at a considerable distance were struck down by the deadly rain. The

total list of killed and wounded was therefore a very large one. Of the factory itself scarcely a trace was left; the ground all about was strewn with shockingly mangled bodies, and numberless houses were shattered and wrecked. A panic spread through the city, and several arrests were made in the terror and agitation of the moment; but it seems probable that the explosion resulted from purely accidental causes.

About the middle of the month of May, the Central Committee of the National Guard made itself supreme at the War Office. It decreed that each commander in the army should have a civil delegate to watch over him, to guard against the encroachments of the military power. Minor changes were being perpetually made; distrust was universal; arrests were increasingly frequent. The Commune was growing wild with rage, disappointment, and fear; and it was openly repeated, over and over again, that the authorities would blow up and destroy Paris rather than surrender.* For suppression of papers, the Commune might have safely entered into comparison with the most despotic Government that had ever before existed in France. The *Official Journal* of the 19th of May contained a decree of the Committee of Public Safety suppressing ten journals, one of which was the celebrated *Revue des Deux Mondes*, while another, oddly enough, was named the *Commune*. The decree stated that no new journal or periodical would be allowed to appear before the end of the war; that all articles must be signed by the writers; that attacks on the Commune would be submitted to the judgment of a court-martial; and that printers contravening the decree would be prosecuted, and their accomplices and presses seized. What, it may be asked, had the Paris press gained by either the Republic of September 4th, or the Commune?

It was in the expiring days of this frantic rule that the decree respecting the hostages was again brought forward. The pretext was an alleged atrocity by the Versailles army. M. Vésinier states that on the 17th of May a report was laid before the Commune, affirming that a young woman belonging to the ambulances had been assaulted, dishonoured, and killed by some of the soldiers besieging Paris. On the demand of Citizen Protot, the following order of the day was adopted:—"The Commune, referring to its decree of April 7th concerning hostages, demands its immediate execution."* The official historian of this Reign of Terror remarks that the incident alluded to, and the vote growing out of it, are the best reply to the accusation of ferocity brought against the Commune. "It was a month and six days," he proceeded, "since the decree respecting hostages had been voted, which ordered that all executions of partisans of the Commune by the bands of Versailles should at once be followed up by a threefold execution of Versaillist prisoners. But, notwithstanding the daily execution of prisoners by the Versaillists, and the quadruple assassination proved by Citizens Gambon, Vésinier, and Langevin" (the allusion here is to the alleged shooting of four National Guards, prisoners, by an officer of the regular army), "the Commune allowed the hostage law to slumber, and had executed no one. It needed the proof of a new and atrocious crime, perpetrated on an innocent ambulance woman, to recall the existence of the hostage law." The case relied on by M. Vésinier is a very weak one. It is most improbable that the Communal leaders would have waited a month and six days without putting their hostage decree in force, if they had really had conclusive proofs of the atrocities to which they allude. Nothing we know of them encourages the belief that they would have been so extremely scrupulous. The story about the ambulance woman rests on a most infirm foundation. The only evidence brought forward in its support is that of a Lieutenant Butin, who repeated the story as told to him by a certain commander. The name of this commander is not given; it does not appear that he was ever sought out and interrogated; and what he is alleged to have seen he only saw afar off through a telescope. A charge made at second-hand, and characterised by so many suspicious features, cannot be said to possess much value. The other alleged atrocities are somewhat better supported, but are far from conclusively proved. It is to be feared, from the testimony of independent witnesses, that the Versaillese did in truth commit acts of unjustifiable severity and passionate vengefulness; yet we may fairly presume that the Commune was not in a position to prove them, or it is inconceivable that the hostage decree should have been allowed to remain a dead letter so long. Even as it was, the decree was not at once put into execution, notwithstanding the order of the day of May 17th. The horrible story of the ambulance woman was probably felt to be of too vague a character to

* A statement to this effect was telegraphed to the *Daily News* by a Paris correspondent on the 19th of May, before the entry of the Versailles troops. As the Communists afterwards asserted—and even found some in England to believe them—that the firing of Paris was done, not by them, but by the invading army, it is as well to bear this fact and date in mind. The *Cri du Peuple*, of the same day, made the same statement.

* Vésinier's "History of the Commune of Paris."

give even a colour of justification to the slaying of the hostages. It was not until the Commune was in the very agony of dissolution, and its chiefs were mad with despair, and utterly indifferent to consequences, that the unfortunate prisoners were massacred by order of the revolutionary leaders.

By the third week in May, the most sanguine supporters of the Commune had lost all hope of success. To continue the struggle was therefore an act of double criminality, and could but have been dictated by a desire to inflict as much injury as possible on the besiegers, and to leave them in possession of only a burnt and desolated city as the meed of their success. M. Vésinier himself places in a strong light, in his "History of the Commune," the desperate state of the Revolutionary forces in the latter days of the struggle. His testimony on this point is worth considering, in forming any estimate of the degree of moral guilt attaching to his party. He remarks (speaking of the period at which we have now arrived):—

"Serious and competent observers did not fail to perceive that the progress of the Versaillists, though slow—often very slow—was none the less sure. Little by little did they advance their positions against the forts and fortifications of Paris. On the other hand, the *matériel* and *personnel* of the Versaillists were daily reinforced. Batteries, siege and marine pieces, mortars, howitzers, and field-artillery, were sent every day from the strongholds and seaports to Versailles. Recruits, also, arrived daily from the provinces, or from Prussia, to swell the ranks of its army; the prisoners of the French army in Germany were allowed to depart in great numbers to augment the forces of Versailles; whilst those of the Commune could not be recruited from the outside, and were constantly diminishing by losses. Every day the Versaillists advanced their works of attack nearer to the forts, and contracted their line of investment. By the help of their reinforcements of artillery, new batteries were erected daily, and their fire grew stronger and stronger.

"Under such circumstances, the Commune had not only to renounce the hope of conquering the army of the Versailles Government outside the ramparts, but likewise to look forward to an attack under the walls and in the streets of Paris. Since the defeat of the provincial towns which had sided with the Commune, only one chance remained for Paris—that of annihilating the Versaillists in its streets. This was where the final struggle, which would decide not only the triumph or defeat of the Commune, but also of the Revolution, or counter-revolution, would have to be made. . . . The people of Paris knew that all their great battles had been won, and the Revolution made triumphant, behind the barricades; and they believed they would again be victorious behind their ramparts of stone and earth."

The "belief" on which the people of Paris (meaning by that term the minority who supported the Commune) are said by M. Vésinier to have relied in those final days, was of the most illusory kind; and it is scarcely conceivable that it could have yielded material for hope to any person of knowledge and reflection. The history of Parisian revolutions shows that barricade-fighting is only successful when the regular army "fraternises" with the insurgents, and when the Government is either unable or unwilling to grapple sternly with the revolt. The first Napoleon and the third, together with General Cavaignac, knew how to deal with street guerillas, and were never worsted in their encounters with them. A barricade is only a rude and irregular fortification, and can always be overcome if there is force enough, and determination enough, and sufficient indifference to the price in blood. There has never been a more desperate street rising than that of June, 1848; yet Cavaignac put his foot on it, and stamped it out. The leaders of the Commune must have been well aware by the middle of May that the Versailles Government was thoroughly in earnest, and that the regular army was resolved to crush the insurrection in its lair, at whatever cost of life. It was idle, therefore, to trust to street fighting to repair the disasters that had already been suffered at the outskirts; and it is not likely that any such hope was seriously entertained. The prolongation of the resistance was simply vengeful, and it adds another shade of blackness to the dark picture of the Communal Republic.

The so-called defence of Paris street by street was, however, resolved on, and the utmost efforts were made to render it effective. M. Vésinier speaks with contempt of the "laughable Barricade Commission" established by the Government of the National Defence, "at the head of which," he scornfully adds, "were Citizen Rochefort and some other barricade-builders of the same stamp." These structures were made out of a few old barrels and some baskets full of earth; but, remarks M. Vésinier, they were mere playthings, and "as far from being made in earnest as every other step taken by the so-called Government of the National Defence." Barricades of a more formidable character were erected after the 18th of March; and the first act of Rossel on becoming Delegate of War was to appoint citizen Gaillard, senior, to the post of superintendent of barricade-building, so that a second line of defence might be created, together with three citadels, also of barricades, to be planted in certain designated localities. Gaillard appears to have thrown himself into his work with enthusiasm. To the admiring eye of M. Vésinier, his barricades

were characterised, not merely by "art," which no doubt was an important requisite, but by "considerable good taste," which in a barricade seems superfluous, if not impossible. "Some," he relates, "were really small fortresses. That at the angle of the Rue de Rivoli and the Rue de St. Florentin was a veritable redoubt, supporting itself to the right on the Ministry of Marine, and to the left on the Tuileries. It was constructed of earth, and of sacks filled with earth, and was pierced with five embrasures. Four other barricades defended the Place de la Concorde. The Places Vendôme, Madeleine, and that of the Hôtel de Ville, were very strongly barricaded, as were also a great many streets in the heart of the city, and in the most populous arrondissements inhabited by the working classes. But most of these barricades were built for the purpose of protecting certain districts, rather than for the general strategic defence of Paris."

Cluseret, in an address from prison to his "dear fellow-citizens," published in the *Mot d'Ordre* on the 16th of May, claimed credit for having originated the particular system of barricades then being carried out. "We have to submit," said he, "to a regular siege. If you do not wish to awake one of these mornings, and find the enemy in Paris, you must oppose to his siege-works counter siege-works. Battery must be opposed to battery, earth to earth. In a word, you must make the war one of positions. To oppose nothing but human breasts to projectile is simply insane. It is professional skill, nothing but professional skill, always professional skill, that is wanted." The last remark was very true; but the professional skill was on the side of Versailles, and it conferred the victory on the Government of M. Thiers. Whether this letter had any favourable effect on the position of its author is not stated; but at the last sitting of the Commune, which took



GENERAL L'ADMIRAULT.

place on May 21st, Cluseret was examined, and set at liberty.

One of the weakest and most exposed parts of the Paris fortifications was that near the Point du Jour, between the Porte de Passy and the Porte St. Cloud. Preparations were accordingly made for resisting any attack that might be directed against this quarter. The viaduct of the Auteuil Railway was walled, barricaded, and fortified, as a second line of defence between Porte de Passy and the Seine. The passage of the Portes du Point du Jour, St. Cloud, Auteuil, Passy, Muette, Dauphine, &c., was barricaded, and a battery was placed between the railway viaduct and the fortifications opposite Bastion No. 62, which defended the approach to the Porte de la Muette. Another battery was stationed near the barricades at the intersection of the same railway viaduct and of the streets leading to the Portes de St. Cloud and Point du Jour. A strong barricade at the Quai d'Auteuil, near the Rue Guillon, commanded the quay, the Auteuil viaduct, and the Porte de Billancourt. On the other side of the river, a menacing structure dominated the quay, and protected the Porte du Bas Meudon. Between the Porte de la Muette and the Seine, barricades were erected at all the intersections of the streets, avenues, and roads in the neighbourhood. Gunboats defended the passage of the Seine; the open places in front of the Porte d'Auteuil and of the Passy station were barricaded; the Place d'Eylau was similarly fortified; other points of entrance were carefully blocked; and the most important positions were united by covered roads, and their barricades connected with each other by underground trenches. Some of the neighbouring houses were crenellated, and the windows were protected by sacks of earth. Another strong barricade was erected on the Quai de Passy, near the Jesuits' College, which was converted into a regular fortress, commanding the outer walls between Bastions 62 and 68. The walls of the college gardens and of others in the neighbourhood were also turned to account; all the adjacent streets were barricaded, and the terraces were so adjusted as to be made fit for the reception of mitrailleuses and cannon. In this



CLUSERET.

way was formed a species of irregular quadrilateral —a labyrinth of barricades, earthworks, trenches, embankments, covered ways, and extemporised fortresses, presenting, no doubt, a series of formidable obstructions to the attacking force, yet, as the event proved, of insufficient power to keep them out when they were resolved on entering. In addition to these defences, works of a similar nature were planted about the Trocadero, the Place de l'Etoile, and the Place Wagram, to guard against the forcing of the gates in that direction. The works here were of a very elaborate character. In the Avenue de la Muette was an enormous mound of earth, provided with a large platform, capable of holding five or six pieces of artillery, and furnished likewise with a trench in front, and a casemated way on the right. An extensive cemetery situated on a terrace was fortified and crenellated. The Arch of Triumph was transformed into a citadel, and was stocked with ammunition, provisions, and water for a fortnight. Various covered ways led from point to point; the houses were loopholed; the cellars were connected with the barricades by underground passages; and the gardens, yards, and other enclosures in the neighbourhood, communicated with each other by openings. The circus of the Champs Elysées, the Parc de Monceaux, the Place de la Concorde, the gardens of the Tuileries, the Western Railway Terminus, the Buttes Montmartre, and other localities, were equally protected. These were the chief works on the right bank of the Seine. The left bank had four lines of defence, and advantage was taken of various fortifications which had been made during the Prussian siege. From 5,000 to 6,000 workmen laboured day and night, under the direction of the auxiliary corps of engineers, to complete these defences; and by the 20th of May all was ready.

Such is, in effect, the account given by M. Vésinier of the system of internal fortifications created by the Commune for resisting the final assault of the national army. If not over-coloured, it certainly presents a very serious view of the difficulties which the troops had to overcome; and probably barricade-making was never so nearly assimilated to a science. That it failed after all to keep out the enemy is attributed by M. Vésinier to the feebleness of the defence, and to the want of sufficient armament. But the means at the disposal of the Commune were known beforehand, and, as success was in the highest degree improbable, the continuance of the struggle was in itself an atrocity of the deepest dye.

Rossel did not take anything like the same flattering view of these barricades. He describes them as really poor fortifications. According to his account, they were walls of paving-stones, from five to six feet in height, and from three feet four inches to five feet in thickness, sometimes faced and sometimes battlemented with paving-stones. An entrenchment of this nature, observed Colonel Rossel, is, when once taken, easily turned against its defenders, as both sides are alike. All passers-by were employed in the construction of these rough fortifications; and each was ordered to furnish a paving-stone for himself, and one for his wife. Sometimes the request met with a refusal, and in that case the refractory citizen was forced to contribute his quota. It was a less difficult matter to make the barricades than to man them when made. M. Vésinier—who, in addition to his other duties, acted as a delegate to the corps of engineers appointed to push forward the works requisite for the defence of the capital, and to prevent the besieging army from taking the *enceinte* of the fortifications—drew up a report to the Delegate of War and the Committee of Public Safety, urging that the barricades should be occupied by the National Guard, and armed with mitrailleuses and cannon in such numbers as to be able to destroy the enemy, should he succeed in taking the *enceinte*. He asserts, however, that these strategical lines were never armed nor occupied; and the truth appears to be that the Commune had not sufficient force at its bidding, and was distracted with mutual jealousies, divided councils, and alarm.

The capture of Fort Vanvres, on the morning of the 14th of May, brought the Versaillese still nearer to the accomplishment of their difficult and painful task. This new success was a consequence of the capture of Issy, followed by an advance in the direction of the sister fort. The Lycée of Vanvres, a fine building situated in the park near the village of Issy, was taken on the night of the 12th, with considerable loss to the Communists; and the Versaillese then pushed forward towards the Convent des Oiseaux, between Fort Vanvres and the *enceinte*. A good deal had been done by the Federals towards strengthening this position, which was one of importance to them. They had crenellated the walls of the enclosure, and planted several cannon there; and they now made a vigorous resistance. A hundred of their number were killed in the engagement; but the Government forces possessed themselves of the convent, capturing eight guns and several hundred prisoners. Vanvres was thus seriously threatened, and on the 14th it fell. Sixty guns and ten mortars were found in the fort: thirty killed lay about, and a few insurgents, who

had remained in the work, were captured. The greater number of the defenders, however, had escaped—some by a subterranean passage connecting Vanvres with Montrouge, others through the catacombs which stretch under that part of Paris and the environs. Those who fled by the latter way made their appearance in the city looking more dead than alive. Exhausted with fatigue and want of food, covered with dust from their wanderings among the dry skeletons of those strange underground regions, their faces blackened with powder, and their clothes torn, they emerged into light like spectres. For ten successive hours during that Sunday "they straggled in," says a contemporary account, "fainting, famished, and unrecognisable." A labouring man first discovered these fugitives in the catacombs. He had entered the vaults to do some work, and was astonished to encounter a party of a hundred National Guards, accompanied by a beardless lieutenant, who was in fact a woman in disguise—the mistress of the Commandant of Vanvres, where she had been for several days, enduring the fire, and taking her share in pointing the guns. The hundred men were the staff of the fort, and they were all glad to get out of the grip of the Versaillese.

The Communal authorities endeavoured for several days to conceal the loss of Fort Vanvres, and even asserted that they had themselves achieved successes in that direction. Nothing, however, could gloss over the irretrievably shattered state of their fortunes. The Versaillese soon made good their communications from Issy to the village of Montrouge, and established batteries on the *glacis* before Fort Vanvres. The insurgents stationed in the villages of Petit Vanvres and Montrouge were compelled to retire into Paris; it became necessary to abandon position after position; and the day was now rapidly approaching when the only resource would be hand-to-hand fighting in the streets of Paris. The Versaillese army was more than 100,000 strong, and was close up to the walls. Of these soldiers a large proportion were veterans, who knew what fighting really meant, and who were in good condition, and well furnished with material of war. Their recent successes had raised their spirits, and all about the western and southern sides of the city were evidences of the terrific effect of their siege-guns. A correspondent of the *Daily News*, who, in company with some French officers and soldiers of the 89th Regiment, made a tour of inspection about the 11th or 12th of May, related that the railway station at Clamart, which had been lost and taken by the insurgents twice, but which was at length held by the Versailles troops, after a frightful butchery, presented all the signs of terrible fighting; the walls knocked to pieces, the ground stained with blood, and strewn with képis, torn clothes, &c. After the last fight at this ill-starred place, the dead bodies were so numerous that they resembled sacks of flour piled up in a corn-store. From Clamart the correspondent and his companions marched along the high road to the village of Issy, in line-of-battle order, exposed all the while to the fire from the *enceinte*, on account of the elevated position of the road. Fort Issy was in a most dilapidated condition; Vanvres, however, had suffered much less. On reaching the village of Issy, the fire became very hot, for the insurgents still had possession of the last barricade, and of the last houses of the village, next the ramparts. The men of the 89th Regiment were sent to relieve the troops who had been on duty there for the previous four-and-twenty hours. The new-comers kept up a tremendous fusillade all through the night, and towards morning the National Guards abandoned their barricade, and retired to the houses. The 89th pressed on, took up a position on the deserted barricade, and poured so deadly a volley into the houses that, in the course of the afternoon, the village of Issy was completely in possession of the attacking force. In the streets were found ten barricades, made of paving-stones, topped and faced with sand-bags. Some were mounted with two or three pieces of cannon. Shells from the Paris fortifications continued to fall on the village during the ensuing night, and several catastrophes occurred. One of these shells passed through a house, and penetrated to a cellar where the master of the place, his wife, and a child three years old, lay sleeping. The man was badly wounded, the child was struck dumb with terror, and the wife escaped unhurt. The same correspondent recorded that the Lycée of Vanvres was as thoroughly a wreck as any building in the neighbourhood of Paris. It was completely riddled by shot and shell; its noble halls and corridors were no longer distinguishable, and the few walls that remained were in ruins. This college was the last stronghold the insurgents held in that direction in advance of the ramparts. The Government troops had now established themselves beyond it, and the artillerymen proceeded to erect a breaching-battery within a short distance of the *enceinte*, though the fire of the insurgents was constant. In the whole of the fighting, however, the 89th Regiment had only three men killed, and about twenty wounded.

The Versailles siege-batteries opened fire on the *enceinte* of Paris on the 18th of May, with great

effect. The attack continued all day, but on the following morning was less violent in the direction of Auteuil, while towards the south there was a cessation of the firing. Considerable fighting occurred at Neuilly on the 19th; the gates at the Point du Jour and Auteuil were nearly destroyed; and twenty-two shells fell in less than a quarter of an hour on the Trocadero. The Versailles troops encamped on the Bois de Boulogne attempted seven times to storm the ramparts by means of scaling-ladders, but without success. Breaching-batteries were planted against the bastions of La Muette and of the Dauphine Gate, and a withering fire was poured for hours upon the ramparts. The Central Committee of the National Guard ordered a large number of troops and materials to be despatched to the threatened points, and several members of the Commune went to the advanced posts themselves; but little could be done. A very severe engagement was fought on the 20th along the ground extending from Auteuil to Passy; the bayonet was freely used, and the Government troops suffered a good deal. The Communal generals professed to be satisfied with the results of the day's fighting; yet they must have known that the situation could hardly have been worse.

The end, indeed, was so manifestly approaching that some of the revolutionary leaders thought it advisable to seek safety in flight. Rochefort, who was never remarkable for courage, tried to escape on the 20th, but was captured by the Versaillese, together with his secretary, M. Mourot. The former had endeavoured to disguise himself by shaving off his beard, and cutting his thick, bushy hair; but he was recognised nevertheless. When escorted into Versailles on Sunday, the 21st, a scene of the wildest excitement took place. The approach of the captive was heralded by a squadron of *gendarmes;* he himself was seated in an omnibus, with his secretary and four police agents in plain clothes; and the vehicle was closely followed by another squadron of *gendarmes*. The prisoner was received with shouts of execration, in which all classes of citizens joined. Even people of respectability cried, "Down with the assassin—the brigand! To death with him!" It was with no little difficulty that the cavalry prevented the crowd from dragging him out of the omnibus, and despatching him on the spot; and when a sympathiser with the Red Republican aristocrat exclaimed "Long live Rochefort!" he was so severely handled that it was found necessary to arrest him as the only means of saving his life from the vengeance of the populace. Rochefort had never been actively identified with the Commune; but the people of Versailles charged him with having done much to bring about the anarchical rule then perishing in blood. His savage attacks on the Empire—his perpetual incentives to insurrection—his base flattery of the mob—his truculent and venomous writings against the very elements of social order—had prepared the ground for the Commune, and had led by natural transitions to all which followed. It is true that he quarrelled with the Commune, as he had quarrelled with the Empire and with the Government of the National Defence; but that was simply because it is the tendency of such minds to pull down whatever they find set up—even if they have contributed to set it up themselves. He had helped, more perhaps than any man, to generate that revolutionary atmosphere out of which the Commune had arisen; and the Versaillese, not unnaturally, made him responsible for a political condition in which, when it came, he scarcely participated.

Those members of the Commune who remained at their posts—and it must be admitted that they were the majority—became more recklessly savage as the days passed on. Peculiar infamy is associated with the name of Raoul Rigault, the new Public Prosecutor; though whether he was really worse than the others may be questioned. The testimony to character is not worth much; but it is only right to quote the statement of M. Vésinier, that there "never was a man who possessed a finer sense of justice," and that during the debate on the hostage law he observed that he would rather let all the guilty escape than execute one innocent person. It also appears that shortly after his assumption of the duties of Public Prosecutor he published an order that thenceforth no person, either civil or military, should be imprisoned, unless an official report, detailing the alleged offences of the accused, with the names and addresses of the witnesses, were lodged at the clerk's office of the prison by the citizen making the arrest. Rigault was but young, and may perhaps have been influenced by his colleagues; but it is certain that his administration of the office of Public Prosecutor was characterised by great atrocities. Rossel says of him that "at the Prefecture of Police he led the scandalous existence of a spendthrift rake, surrounded by useless persons, and giving up the greater part of his time to debauchery." He had for his private secretary and chief assistant a man named Gaston Pierre Dacosta, twenty-two years of age, who had for a long while been on such intimate terms of friendship with his chief that he went by the name of "Raoul Rigault's dog." This

individual had been one of the contributors to Rochefort's journal, the *Mot d'Ordre*, and, when a youth of eighteen, under the Empire, had been sentenced to fifteen days' imprisonment for uttering seditious cries. On the 1st of May he was appointed Assistant Public Prosecutor to the Commune; but at times he called himself Commissary of Police, or examining magistrate. During the time he occupied this post he signed ten warrants and fifty-nine orders of imprisonment. Amongst the various arrests which he authorised was that of M. Largillière, who was charged, on the 6th of May, with having been one of the secret agents of the Imperial detective police. After an examination by Dacosta, he was consigned, on the 22nd of May, to the Mazas prison, whence he was transferred to La Roquette, and there shot on the 26th. Others were treated with similar severity by the directions of this youthful upstart, who wrote on the order for the arrest of a secret police-agent of the Empire, named Ruault, "Reserve this scoundrel for the platoon of execution." His life, however, was spared on his consenting to make certain revelations. It is possible that some of the excesses of Dacosta may have been imputed to Raoul Rigault; but the latter, as head of the department in which Dacosta held only a subordinate post, must of course take his share of the guilt.

From various accounts, moreover, it appears that Rigault was quite capable of a needless brutality of manner, over and above the severity which he might have supposed inseparable from his office. The Abbé Lamazou, in his work entitled "The Place Vendôme and La Roquette," speaks of Rigault and Ferré—the latter of whom succeeded Cournet at the Prefecture of Police—as the two most depraved and bloodthirsty members of the Commune. "Ferré," he says, "showed a sort of refinement in his cynicism; Rigault boasted a sort of monstrous ferocity. The former found his delight in deriding and humbling his victims; the latter in frightening and then murdering them." Rigault, according to the same authority, was an especially bitter enemy to the clergy. A few days after the arrest of the Archbishop of Paris, a Dr. Demarquay, who, in connection with the ambulance of the press, had shown great courage and zeal in attending to the wounded, called on Rigault, and implored him to restore Monseigneur Darboy to liberty. The Minister flatly refused, saying, "No; the criterion of our revolution is death to the priests." On M. Demarquay insisting, Rigault retorted, "Stop, stop! We have had quite enough of this stuff. If you go on taking an interest in those scoundrels, I'll have you shot, though I know you to be a capital physician." He behaved, it is alleged, with great brutality to M. Gustave Chaudey, a Republican, a freethinker, and a disciple of Proudhon, who was arrested for having spoken contemptuously of the Commune, and for firing on the people on the 22nd of January. On being told that he was going to be shot instantly, Chaudey requested to be allowed a few minutes to collect himself, and settle his family affairs. "What!" exclaimed Rigault, "are you going to confession? I did not think you so much of a Jesuit. Well, if you want to have one of those black beetles, I can get one for you." The same account states that before Chaudey was shot, Rigault amused himself with dictating, within hearing of his victim, the official registration of his death. It must of course be borne in mind that these stories rest on the testimony of one of that order to which Raoul Rigault and his colleagues were most bitterly opposed. They should consequently be received with the degree of caution which naturally attaches to the evidence of a witness whose feelings and interests are strongly against the accused; yet it is impossible to deny that the general policy of the Commune, its avowed objects, its unquestionable acts, and the character of many of its agents, give a great appearance of truthfulness to such narratives of brutality and vulgar spite.

The Committee of Public Safety, and the Central Committee of the National Guard, acting in concert, were now the real dictators of Paris. The Communal Council—that is to say, the elected body—was little else than a name. This species of despotism did not at all satisfy some members of the Commune, and, about the middle of May, they published a protest, of which the opening sentences ran:—"By a special and distinct vote, the Commune of Paris has surrendered its powers into the hands of a Dictatorship, to which it has given the name of Committee of Public Safety. The majority of the Commune has declared itself irresponsible by its vote, and has abandoned to this Committee all the responsibility of the situation. The minority, to which we belong, affirms, on the contrary, this opinion: That the Commune owes it to the revolutionary movement, political and social, to accept all responsibility, and to refuse none, however worthy may be the hands to which it is surrendered." The declaration was signed by the following names, representing important personages in the Commune:—"Charles Beslay, Jourde, Theisz, Lefrançais, Eugene Gérardin, Vermorel, Clemence Andrieux, Serrailler, Longuet, Arthur Arnould, Clement Victor, Avrial, Ostun, Frankel

Pindy, Arnold J. Vallés, Tridon, Varlin, and Courbet." This protest was discussed at a meeting of the Commune on the 17th, when the minority were sharply blamed for the course they had taken, and it was suggested that they should withdraw the document which had given so much offence. So complete was the domination of the Committee of Public Safety, in all matters relating to the civil administration, that on the 18th of May they decreed that no one detained in prison could be released without their written order. In martial affairs, the Central Committee of the National Guard was supreme. The Commission of the Commune and the Central Committee published, on the 19th, an address to the people of Paris and the National Guards, which began by saying that false rumours of disagreement between the two Powers had prevailed, and that from that day the Central Committee entered upon its functions in the administration of war. The Commune and Committee had signed a pact, and thenceforth must be trusted. The Radical newspapers were very indignant at the growing power of the Central Committee, and the *Sociale* demanded the impeachment of its members, and the entire suppression of the body. On the other hand, the *Père Duchesne* earnestly recommended a resort to the guillotine, and the establishment of a Reign of Terror. The want of cohesion on the part of these madmen became the more extreme as the necessity for cohesion became the more imperative.

The feeling of distrust of all men and all things was in itself a mortal malady, undermining what little remained of even that low form of vitality which the Commune originally possessed. Arrests were so frequent that no one felt himself safe. Vague rumours of a plot to overthrow the Revolutionary Government filled the air. Orders were issued that all quarters of Paris should be searched for arms and refractory National Guards; and the garden of the Luxembourg was closed, and occupied by four battalions, as a precaution against any rising which might be attempted. It was also decided, in imitation of a law of 1793, that all citizens were to be furnished with official cards stating their name, age, profession, place of residence, battalion, and company, with full personal description, attested by the municipal authorities. By this order, any National Guard was invested with the right to demand of a citizen the production of his card, and any one without it might be arrested, and confined until he had established his identity. In midst of the dismay caused by these apprehensions and perpetual changes, the *Official Journal* added to the general alarm and distress by announcing that all inhabitants of Paris then absent from the city must return to their houses within eight-and-forty hours, or otherwise their stocks, bonds, shares, and ledgers, would be burnt. What made this abominable decree still more cruel was the fact, which must have been known to the Communal authorities, that the Versailles Government prevented any one going into Paris, and actually stopped and turned back several Englishman and Americans who endeavoured to do so. But the Commune had reached that point at which there was no longer any appeal but to the sentiment of fear. It now scarcely professed to do anything more than strike terror into the refractory. There were still, however, some who had the courage to criticise and oppose it, even among its own ranks. The protest of the minority has already been mentioned, and it should be added that M. Beslay, Delegate to the Bank of France, gave in his resignation because of the invasion of the Bank by the National Guards.

The Communal Council, nevertheless, continued to the last its abortive attempts at legislation. In this the final week of its existence, it decreed that all functionaries guilty of extortion, depredation, or theft, should, as long as the war lasted, be brought before a court-martial; that all who were guilty should be punished with death; and that, "as soon as the bands of Versailles were defeated," an inquiry should be commenced into the conduct of all who had the management of the public funds. It also issued edicts for the creation of a superior Commission of Accounts, consisting of four members who were to furnish a monthly report; for abolishing plurality of salaries; and for suppressing the subvention and monopoly of the theatres, which were to be placed under the regulation of associations. One of the members proposed the abolition of religious worship in all churches, and expressed a wish that they might be opened only for lecturing on atheism, and for the annihilation of old prejudices; but it does not appear that this suggestion was adopted.

Some few enthusiasts still made attempts at a compromise. Delegates from the Congress held at Lyons arrived in Paris on the 20th of May, bringing a declaration addressed to M. Thiers and the Commune, in which it was affirmed that the Republic was the only possible and legitimate Government, and communal autonomy the sole basis of the Republic. The declaration demanded that hostilities should cease, that the National Assembly, whose mission was at an end, should be dissolved, that the Commune should also be dissolved, that municipal elections should be held in



PURSUIT OF THE INSURGENTS IN THE CATACOMBS.

Paris, and that elections for a Constituent Assembly should be ordered for the whole of France. In the event of these propositions being rejected, either by the National Assembly or the Commune, the Lyons delegates would hold the body rejecting them responsible before the nation. The declaration was signed by delegates of the Municipal Councils of sixteen departments. The propositions were reasonable enough, and might perhaps have been accepted if made several weeks earlier. But the struggle was now far too deadly to be appeased. About a week before the arrival of the delegation from Lyons, a number of Swiss Republicans had reached Paris with a view to facilitating a reconciliation between the Commune and the Government of Versailles. Citizen Delescluze, however, told them that the attitude assumed by the Administration of M. Thiers rendered any attempt at conciliation impossible. It was but too true, though the fault must be attributed to both sides, and in even greater measure to the anarchists of Paris than to the pseudo-Republicans of Versailles.

CHAPTER XXXV.

The Morning of May 21st—Exposed Condition of the Point du Jour—Terrific Bombardment—Taking of Outworks by the Versaillese—The National Guards driven into the City—Progress of the Invading Army—Dombrowski and his Scheme of Defence—Fighting between the Enceinte and the Railway—Advance of the Government Troops on the 22nd—Desultory Contests in the Streets—Statement of M. Thiers in the National Assembly—The Prussians and Mr. Washburne—Progress of Events on the 23rd—System of Barricades for the Defence of La Villette, Belleville, and the Vicinity—Hopeless Nature of the Struggle—General Character of the Fighting—Ruinous Condition of the Streets—Female Combatants—Taking of the New Opera House—A Theatrical Linesman—Joy of the Civilians at their Deliverance—Conflicts at various Points—Marshal MacMahon's Report on the Taking of Montmartre—Continued Successes of the Versaillese—Death of Dombrowski—The Parisian Workmen at the Barricades—An Orgie of Blood and Debauchery.

CITIZEN VÉSINIER was not wrong in his forebodings when, on making a tour of the defensive works on the morning of Sunday, May 21st, in his capacity as delegate to the corps of engineers, he found that the barricades constructed for the defence of Porte St. Cloud and Porte d'Auteuil, at the Point du Jour—by far the weakest and most exposed part of the fortifications—had been left without men and artillery. He feared the worst results from such a state of unpreparedness, and the progress of events during the day justified his apprehensions. The ramparts between the Porte de la Muette and the Portes St. Cloud and Versailles were being very severely bombarded at five o'clock A.M. A storm of shot and shell poured upon them from the forts of Mont Valérien and Issy, from the redoubts of Châtillon, Meudon, and Genevilliers, and from the siege-batteries at Clamart, Bagneux, Sèvres, St. Cloud, Bellevue, Grande Jatte, the Château de Bécon, Courbevoie, and Asnières. The gates were almost demolished, and even the more solid parts of the fortifications were so seriously damaged that it was obvious they could not keep out the enemy many hours longer. Struck by the threatening aspect of affairs, Vésinier mentioned his misgivings to several of the superior officers; but they all assured him that there was no danger of the fortifications being forced. They deceived themselves grievously, for before evening the troops of the Versailles Government were in the city.

Soon after mid-day, M. Clément, an officer of Engineers of the Versailles army, was proceeding cautiously in advance of a party of his men, who were lying in concealment between the nearest parallel and the Porte St. Cloud, when he found the bastion and the adjoining ramparts entirely unoccupied. M. Clément waved a white handkerchief, as a signal to his men to advance, and in a little while about a hundred soldiers were collected, who proceeded to occupy the deserted position. Word was then passed on from post to post in the rear, and a battalion was soon on its way to the spot. The account of this singular incident given by M. Vésinier, in his "History of the Commune," is of course totally different from what was furnished to the English papers, and, in particular, it states that the Government troops were guided into the city by one who was already within the walls. The ex-Secretary of the Commune says that the following was what happened:—

"Commander Trèves, astonished at the silence of the defenders of Paris, which had lasted for some time, advanced, at three o'clock in the afternoon of May 21st, to the Porte de St. Cloud. During his examination of that gate, he perceived a man in civilian dress at the left bastion, who was hoisting a white flag on it. This unknown man said something, which the com-

mander believed to be, 'Come on, there is nobody.' On this invitation he leaped into the trench, followed by Sergeant Constant, of the 3rd Battalion of the 91st Regiment; ran to the bastion, sprang on to the drawbridge (only a single plank of which remained), and joined his interlocutor. 'My name is Ducatel,' said he. 'I am an overseer of roads and bridges, and an old officer of Marines. You can trust me and my words. Paris is yours if you will only take it. Let your troops enter without loss of time. See, everything is abandoned.' And the bastions on the right and left were, in fact, completely evacuated, and neither near nor far was a National Guard to be seen. Commander Trèves invited M. Ducatel to accompany him out of Paris, and give an account of the situation to the General-in-Chief. He then addressed the following despatch to Generals Douai and Vergé at Villeneuve l'Etang and Sèvres :—'I have just entered Paris with M. Ducatel through the Porte de St. Cloud. Everything is abandoned. I am going to cut the wires of the torpedoes.' Half an hour later, the fire along the whole line was silenced."

By half-past three o'clock Auteuil and the Point du Jour were occupied with a force of sufficient strength, and battalions were also sent to the other gates, to the right and left. The main body of the army was for some time in ignorance of this movement, and Auteuil and Point du Jour were shelled for nearly two hours after they were in possession of the Versailles forces. Subsequently, a little fighting occurred at Auteuil. On the first column of the division of General Vergé arriving there, it was received by volleys of musketry from the houses; but cannon and mitrailleuses were brought to bear on the insurgents, and they ultimately fled to more secure positions further in the city. The division of General Douai entered by the gate of St. Cloud, at the Point du Jour, and occupied the salient between the ramparts and the viaduct. The barracks and casemates were almost ruined by the bombardment, and the insurgents at this locality seem to have had no heart to continue the struggle. Several were captured, and preparations were then made for a further advance. As the rebels were still keeping up a fire from 7-pounders and mitrailleuses along the bastions between Vaugirard and Montrouge, it was determined to assault those positions, and the division of General Cissy advanced to the attack. A short time previously, bearers of flags of truce had informed the general of the evacuation of the Malakoff and its neighbourhood. The Government troops accordingly occupied those places, and the adjoining bastions were afterwards cleared of the rebellious National Guards.

Marshal MacMahon, whose head-quarters at this time were at Mont Valérien, gave orders to all commanders of corps to make the necessary dispositions for entering Paris in the rear of General Douai. General Berthaut, commander of the Seventeenth Division of the Fourth Corps, was the earliest to follow the first-comers. He had orders to take the square formed by Bastions 62 to 67, the Seine, and the viaduct of the Ceinture Railway; and this he effected by marching along the fortifications by the Boulevard Murat, so as to turn the defences of the viaduct facing the Porte du Point du Jour and the Porte St. Cloud. The Vergé Division entered Paris at half-past seven in the evening, and passed by the Versailles road to the Pont de Grenelle, in traversing which ground it touched at the Portes de Meudon, Sèvres, Issy, and Versailles, which it opened to the troops on the left bank of the Seine, so as to allow of their taking Grenelle, Vaugirard, and the vicinity. The Berthaut and Hérillier Divisions of the Fourth Corps, having seized the railway viaduct, advanced to attack the second line of defence, situated between Muette and the Rue Guillon. They took (according to the report of Marshal MacMahon) the St. Périn Asylum, the church, and the Place d'Auteuil. On the right of the line, the Vergé Division took a formidable barricade on the quay at the top of the Rue Guillon, and then advanced to the strong position of the Trocadero, capturing 1,500 rebels. The barricade in the Rue Guillon belonged to the second line of defence, but it appears to have been given up with scarcely a struggle. M. Vésinier observes that even after the forcing of the *enceinte*, and of the first position behind it, the Trocadero could not have been taken if the enormous and formidable barricades at the entrance to the Avenue de l'Impératrice, the Avenue de la Muette, and the Rue Franklin, had been armed and defended. But the Communists preferred to set fire to Paris when they could resist no longer, and to murder the hostages in a wild fury of revenge.

General Clinchamp entered the city at nine o'clock in the evening through the Porte de St. Cloud, and, turning to the left, followed the Boulevards Murat and Suchet, and took the Porte de Passy. "The important position of the Château de la Muette," said MacMahon, in his official report, "rested its defences on the ramparts, and prolonged them to the Seine. Defended by ditches, walls, and iron railings, it was almost unassailable from the rampart side. General Clinchamp moved to the east, turned, and took it." To M. Vésinier, the taking of such a position, when in the hands of so skilful and courageous a general as Dombrowski, appeared an inexplicable

mystery. He never could comprehend why that officer did not formidably arm and vigorously defend these works, which command the Portes de St. Cloud and Point du Jour. Dombrowski was aware of this, and M. Vésinier was convinced that he might have prevented the taking of the gates in question. Some doubt has since been thrown over the conduct and motives of the Pole, and he has been accused of actual treachery to the cause he was professing to serve. Marshal MacMahon, in his evidence before the Committee of Inquiry into the Insurrection, hinted that the insurgent troops had been drawn by their leaders away from the second line of defence, which was one of great strength, and that, owing to this, the Government troops obtained easy access to the more central portions of the city. Admiral Saisset directly accused Dombrowski, together with Engel and Veysset, of having betrayed the cause of the Commune. But the charge was never established; and, considering that Dombrowski afterwards died in the struggle, it seems unlikely that he at least should have sold himself to the Versaillese.

Further divisions of the invading army penetrated into Paris during the night of the 21st and morning of the 22nd. The division of General Faron remained at Passy as a reserve, while that of General Bruat crossed the Seine, and was followed by the forces of General Bocher. The head-quarters of Marshal MacMahon were then removed to the Trocadero, and, as the day wore on, further portions of the city fell into the hands of the conquerors. M. Vésinier, recurring once more to what he describes as the culpable abandonment of the outer line of barricades, says :—"All the formidable defences erected with so much art, and at the cost of such enormous labour, from Point du Jour to the Champs Elysées and the St. Lazare Railway Station, on the left, to the Rue de Vaugirard on the right, which would have secured the inviolability of the *enceinte* of Paris, east and south, for months, if they had been properly armed and defended, fell with scarcely a struggle in the short space of twenty-four hours. The enemy was permitted to take all those parts of Paris between Bastions 44 and 72, which gave free passage to a torrent of the invaders, who precipitated themselves on the interior, and took a third of Paris in a day." It cannot be doubted that this writer exaggerated the degree of resistance which, under any circumstances, the barricades were capable of offering; yet it is certain that they were formidable. Marshal MacMahon testified to this fact before the Committee, and stated that in turning and carrying them he lost 600 killed, and 7,000 wounded.

The chiefs of the Commune were naturally much depressed by the events occurring on the 21st. When, at six o'clock on the evening of that day, Dombrowski forwarded a despatch announcing the capture of the Porte du Point du Jour—adding, however, that he had no fear as to the result—the members of the Committee of Public Safety were considerably agitated. Delescluze, the new Delegate of War, appeared very anxious, and Vésinier, as he has recorded in his work, felt the greatest apprehension. The latter, when the sitting of the Commune (the last it ever held) had come to an end, went with Citizen Gambon to the Ministry of War, to recommend the execution of those measures which, in their opinion, were the only means of averting the danger that threatened Paris. They there met Cluseret, who had just been liberated, and who said he was going to urge the same plan upon the Delegate of War. This plan was simply to place a strong force of men and guns on the inner line of defence; but it is doubtful whether any force at the disposal of the Commune could at that time have stayed the advance of the Versaillese, and we have seen that the insurgent troops were not very well disposed to meet the regular soldiers at close quarters. Shortly afterwards, General La Cécilia—another of the Communal officers, who had had command of Petit Vanvres—entered the Ministry of War, and M. Vésinier begged him to have the works of defence on the left, adjoining the fortifications, immediately armed, and to oppose the passage of the Pont de Grenelle and the railway viaduct with all his strength, so that, in the event of the troops entering by the Point du Jour, they might not be able to spread over the left bank. The same suggestions were afterwards made by M. Vésinier to Delescluze, to whom the Secretary of the Commune remarked that, in the event of precautionary measures being neglected, a third of Paris would be in possession of the enemy by the following morning, and that then all would be lost. Delescluze promised to issue orders according to Vésinier's wishes, and Gambon departed immediately for Passy and Auteuil, to visit the points in jeopardy, and secure their defence. But it was then too late to do anything. At four o'clock on the morning of the 22nd, Citizen Vésinier observed a great number of National Guards traversing the Pont Royal. This was a result of the taking of the gates by the Versaillese, of the outflanking of the Communists (on the left at Muette, and on the right at Vaugirard), and of the passage of the Seine by the Pont de Grenelle. The recommendations of Vésinier had not been carried out, and in the disastrous posture

of events he saw the realisation of his prophecies. The probability is that those who were specially charged with the military affairs of the Commune knew better than he that his suggestions could not be realised. Neither in numbers nor in quality were the insurgents equal to the task of successfully defending their extensive system of barricades, and resisting the onslaught of the trained and veteran soldiers they had now to meet.

On the night of the 21st, the Committee of Public Safety indited the following address to the Parisians:—

"Citizens,—The gate of St. Cloud, attacked from four points at once—namely, by the fire of Mont Valérien, of the Buttes Montmartre (?), of the Moulineaux, and of the Fort of Issy, surrendered by treachery—the gate of St. Cloud has been forced by the Versaillese, who have spread themselves over a portion of the Parisian territory. This reverse, far from subduing us, ought to be an energetic stimulant. The people who dethrone kings, who destroy Bastilles—the people of '89 and '93, the people of the Revolution—cannot lose in one day the fruit of the emancipation of the 18th March. Parisians, the contest in which we are engaged cannot be deserted by one of us, for it is the contest of the future against the past; of liberty against despotism; of equality against monopoly; of fraternity against servitude; of the union of peoples against the egotism of oppressors. To arms! Let us to arms! Let Paris bristle with barricades, and behind these improvised ramparts let it launch again upon its enemies its war-cry—its cry of pride, its cry of defiance; but also its cry of victory, for Paris with its barricades is impregnable. Let the streets be all unpaved: first, because the projectiles of the enemy falling upon the earth are less dangerous; and next, because the paving-stones—a new means of defence—should be heaped at distances on the balconies of the upper floors of the houses. Let Revolutionary Paris—let Paris of the great days—do its duty. The Commune and the Committee of Public Safety will do theirs.—Hôtel de Ville, the 2nd Prairial, year 79.—The Committee of Public Safety,

"ANTOINE ARNAULD, E. EUDES, F. GAMBON, G. RANVIER."

This proclamation was not issued until the 23rd; for the *Official Journal* of the 22nd (which did not appear until the evening) said not a word of the events of the previous day. An address of Delescluze, however, appeared on the 22nd. It began with the exclamations, "Enough of militarism! No more *états-majors*, braided and gold-laced upon every seam! Room for the people; room for combatants with naked arms! The hour for revolutionary war has struck." Delescluze, according to the testimony of Vésinier, detested the military uniform. He was the only man among the laced and bedizened chiefs of the Commune who wore neither insignia nor decoration of any sort, but always dressed in plain, dark clothes. On the morning of the 22nd, the Committee of Public Safety issued the following address to the soldiers of the Government army—an address inspired by the delusion that they would "fraternise" with the people:—

"Soldiers of the Army of Versailles!—The people of Paris will never believe that you can direct against them your arms when their breasts touch yours. Your hands will recoil from an act which would be a veritable fratricide. You are proletarian, as we are; and, like us, you have an interest in not leaving to sworn Monarchists the right of drinking your blood as they drink our sweat. What you did on the 18th March you will do again, and the people will not have the pain of fighting men whom they regard as brothers, and whom they would wish to see seated beside them at the civic banquet of liberty and equality. Come to us, brothers—come to us! Our arms are open to you!—The 3rd Prairial, year 79.—The Committee of Public Safety,

"ARNAULD, BILLIORAY, EUDES, GAMBON, RANVIER."

There was also another address of the same Committee, in which all "good citizens" were summoned to the barricades, in the name of the Republic, the Commune, and liberty.

During the afternoon of the 21st, the Special Correspondent of the *Daily News* had an interview with General Dombrowski at his head-quarters, the Château de la Muette. The general is described by him as a neat, dapper little fellow, dressed in a plain, dark uniform, with very little gold lace. His face was shrewd, and his manner frank and genial. His Staff consisted of eight or nine officers, mostly young men, and all singularly cool and self-possessed. "We are in a deplorably comical position here," said Dombrowski, with a smile and a shrug; "for the fire is both hot and continuous." He ate, read, and talked, all at once, and the roar of the cannonade accompanied his words, and at times almost drowned his voice. He seemed, according to the correspondent, as if he would be rather glad that the Germans should interpose, and so bring the dismal crisis to an end. As Dombrowski and his officers were sitting at dinner, a commandant entered the room in an excited state, and announced that the Versaillese were entering at the gate of St. Cloud, and that the fire from Issy was so terrible that his men had fled with precipitation. He had beaten them with the flat of his sword till his arm ached; but he could not stay the panic. After hearing the commandant to the end, Dombrowski composedly went on with his dinner, and then said:—"Send to the Ministry of

Marine for a battery of 7-pounders; call out the cavalry, the Tirailleurs, and such and such battalions of the National Guards. Let them be ready by seven o'clock. I shall attack with them, and lead the attack myself." To a suggestion that the officer might not be able to get a whole battery, Dombrowski rejoined, "Bring what you can, then river. The loss of Fort Issy, he explained, had made that portion of the continuous fortification untenable. He had foreseen the necessity for several days, and had prepared a second line of defence, of which the railway viaduct defined the sweep. He did not care to recover the abandoned section of the *enceinte*, but meant to fight for



GENERAL LEBRUN.

—two, three, or four guns; and see that the tumbrils are in order. Go and obey." The general, it appears, had a habit of winding up his orders with this pithy and peremptory little sentence, characteristic rather of an Oriental potentate than of a Republican general. Oriental instincts, however, are strong in the Polish nature, and the disorderly elements of Parisian Red Republicanism were none the worse for having a firm hand upon them. Dombrowski subsequently determined to abandon the *enceinte* from Porte d'Auteuil to the fighting's sake, in order to keep up the flagging spirits of his men.

At night (on the 21st) here was a hot struggle as the troops advanced into the city. Dombrowski, according to promise, headed an attack on the enemy in the space between the *enceinte* and the railway, and an attempt was made to storm the Cimétière des Pauvres; but, although the Communists had a little partial and temporary success, they were eventually driven back. Many of them had been copiously plied with strong liquor, or had



EFFECTS OF THE EXPLOSION OF A SHELL IN A HOUSE IN THE SUBURBS.

helped themselves; and these fought with the furious and spasmodic courage of drunkenness. At two o'clock on the morning of the 22nd, a tremendous fire opened on the railway. The Communists made a feeble reply; but suddenly a noise of heavy firing from the north came on the wind. Some shouted, "We are surrounded! The Versaillese are pouring in by the gates of Auteuil, Passy, and La Muette!" A terrible panic at once set in. The cries common to Frenchmen on such occasions—"Save yourselves!" and "We are betrayed!"—were once more heard. Arms were thrown away, and the flight became general. Dombrowski and his Staff were not to be seen. "There was a cry, too," says the *Daily News* correspondent, "that there was an invasion from the south; and so men surged, and struggled, and blasphemed confusedly up the Quai in dire confusion, shot and shell ever chasing them as they went. In the extremity of panic, mingled with rage, men blazed off their pieces indiscriminately, and struck each other with the clubbed ends. Then, battalions or detachments were met coming up, upon which surged the tide of fugitives, imparted to them their panic, and carried them away in their rush." As the morning advanced, the Government troops were massed about the Arch of Triumph, and just below that structure they had a field-piece, which swept the Champs Elysées. They afterwards marched down the Avenue Friedland towards the Boulevard Haussmann, and took up a position in front of the Caserne de la Pépinière. The correspondent of the *Daily News* described this as a noble position, and continued:—

"From it they could sweep the Boulevard Malesherbes straight down to the Madeleine, and so open up their way into the Rue Royale, and down it into the back of the barricade at its end, facing the Place de la Concorde. There, too, they could sweep the Boulevard Haussmann along its whole length, and, by a steady fire along those thoroughfares, so far prevent concentration, and cut that part of Paris practically into three slices. Re-crossing the Boulevard Haussmann, I made my way by devious paths towards the Palais Royal. Shells seemed to be bursting all over the city. They were time-fuse shells; and I could see many of them burst in a white puff of smoke high in air. Several fell on and about the Bourse as I was passing, and the neighbourhood was silent and deserted, save for National Guards in small parties, or singly, hurrying backwards and forwards. I could not tell whether they were advancing or retreating. Everywhere barricades were being hastily thrown up; but I dodged them all till I got to the Place du Palais Royal. Here two barricades were being constructed—one across the neck of the Rue St. Honoré, another across the neck of the Rue de Rivoli. For the latter, the material was chiefly furnished by a great number of articles not unknown in England under the name of *Sommier Tucker* (which were hurriedly pitched out of the windows of the establishment) and by mattresses from the Guards barracks at the Tuileries. The Rue St. Honoré barricade was formed of paving-stones, cabs, and carriages, and I was compelled, *nolens volens*, to assist in the construction of it. It is pleasant, even if you are forced to do a thing, to attempt doing it in a satisfactory manner; and, observing that an embrasure had been neglected in the construction of the barricade, I devoted my energies to remedying this defect. I was not sorry, however, to be released from my task after a quarter of an hour's work, the more so as the shell-fire was increasing in warmth and proximity. I noticed that from the great barricade at the top of St. Honoré the Communists had got one gun at least into action, and were using it to fire somewhere in the direction of the Arch of Triumph. It was impossible to fulfil my original intention, which was to cross to the Ministry of War, which I judged would form an interesting if not an edifying spectacle; therefore I returned in the direction of the New Opera House. Crossing the Boulevard, I noticed that the Versaillists must have gained the Madeleine, between which and their position at the Pépinière Barracks no obstacle in the shape of a barricade intervened, for they had thrown up across the end of the Boulevard de la Madeleine a barricade of trees and casks. It was, as it turned out, not a barricade, but an emplacement for artillery. The Communists, on their side, had a temporary barricade, chiefly of provision-wagons, across the Boulevard at the head of the Rue de la Paix. By half-past nine the Versaillists had advanced considerably down the Boulevard Haussmann, which they swept with a heavy musketry-fire. Two lads were shot down close to me at the end of the Rue de Lafayette. There was no return-fire of any account. Many Communists passed, falling back, declaring as usual that they had been betrayed."

The troops, it is stated, were led by gendarmes and sailors, or marines. The National Guards receded, taking advantage of lamp-posts and doorways for making a temporary stand, and firing wildly. At the corner of the Rues Lafayette and Lafitte, a mounted Spahi and an officer were burning the papers of the battalion to which they belonged, that they might not bear witness against its members. A passionate desire to leave the city was manifested by several persons, and English passports were in great request, but all out-going trains were stopped, and the gates were closed. There was no alternative but to fight or submit, and the maddened Communists chose the former. They kept on retreating, however, throwing up barricades at every available point, and shaping their course towards Montmartre, which had by this time opened fire in reply to the military guns on the Trocadero. By noon of the 22nd, the Government troops had

gained the Place de l'Europe, near the Western Terminus, on their way to Montmartre. The Military School, in the Place of that name, was taken by the division of General Susbielle at six o'clock in the evening, without any resistance. This was owing to the want of spirit evinced by the Communal commander at that position—Lieutenant-Colonel Razoua—who, according to an account written by himself, abandoned the barricade when he saw the approach of the enemy, went straight home, dressed himself in plain clothes, and on the evening of the following day escaped to Geneva. At about the same time, the Lian Brigade took the Montparnasse railway station, and the Second Brigade of the Bruat Division occupied the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the palace of the Corps Législatif. The Government troops were also in possession of the Invalides, the Champs Elysées, and the Place du Nouvel Opéra.

The members of the French Government were naturally much elated by the success attending their troops. At the sitting of the National Assembly on the 22nd, M. Thiers said:—"The cause of justice, order, and civilisation has triumphed, thanks to our brave army. The generals, officers, and soldiers, especially the latter, have all done their duty. I congratulate the army for having generously shed its blood to accomplish its duty." M. Thiers then alluded to the powerful effect of the Versailles artillery, which had enabled the engineers to advance rapidly with the works against the forts of Issy and Vanvres, and subsequently against the *enceinte*. He added:—"We did not expect to enter Paris for two or three days, and then only at the cost of painful efforts and sacrifices. We have been spared this cruel task. Yesterday, General Douai perceived that the gate of St. Cloud was approachable. His army soon penetrated into the interior of the city, and advanced as far as the Arc de Triomphe. General l'Admirault entered simultaneously on the left, and occupied the Avenue of the Grand Army and the Arc de Triomphe, while General Vinoy communicates with General Cissy, who rests his left wing upon Montparnasse, and his right upon the Invalides. General Clinchamp has entered by the Faubourg St. Honoré, and reached the Opera House. Such was the position of affairs at two o'clock yesterday afternoon. We are disposed to believe that Paris will soon be restored to her rightful Sovereign—namely, France." Speaking of the fate that awaited the insurgents, M. Thiers said:—"The laws will be rigorously carried out. It will be with all the severity of the law in our hands that we shall proceed against the criminals who have respected neither private property nor public monuments." M. Thiers further paid a tribute to the sailors who had fought with energy and devotion at the side of the land forces. A vote of thanks to M. Thiers and the army was afterwards carried by acclamation; and the Chief of the Executive, in expressing his gratitude to the Assembly, said that the vote just come to was the greatest recompense he had ever received.

M. Thiers had himself, in company with Marshal MacMahon, witnessed the entry of the Government troops into Paris by the Porte St. Cloud on the 21st. On the following morning he went to inspect the operations at that gate, and in the course of the day he announced by telegraph to the Prefects that half the army had entered Paris. All communication with the city was stopped; photographs of the principal insurgents were distributed to the Commissaries of Police; and it was announced that the Germans would prevent the spread of the Communist movement by hindering the rebels from escaping. The advanced Prussian corps were doubled, and orders were given to the outposts to drive back all fugitives. It was stated that the Germans would demand satisfaction of the Commune, should the hotel of Mr. Washburne, the American Minister, be pillaged. The reason why the Prussian authorities took this interest in the representative of the United States was that he had undertaken the charge of German affairs in Paris during the war, and still continued to do so under the Commune. It has, indeed, been asserted that Mr. Washburne was entrusted with the distribution of the funds forwarded from Prussia for the payment of German spies in Paris while the war was proceeding. M. Jules Favre was questioned on this matter by the Committee of Inquiry; but he replied that, although the enemy was almost invariably apprised of the intended movements of the Government, and although on one occasion it was found necessary to arrest an American officer, who was afterwards released on the interposition of Mr. Washburne, he (M. Favre) never had actual proofs of the complicity of the United States representative with the Prussian spy-system.

The struggle for the possession of Paris continued throughout the 23rd, with additional success for the Government troops. Ninety thousand soldiers had by this time entered the city. General Cissy established himself in the positions extending from the Montparnasse railway station to the Military School, and formed a line of troops along the left bank of the Seine to the Tuileries. Generals Douai and Vinoy took possession of that building, together with the Louvre and the Place Vendôme. General Clinchamp seized on the Opera House, the St.

Lazare railway station, and Batignolles, and carried a barricade near Clichy, which brought him to the foot of Montmartre. The latter position was at the same time turned by General l'Admirault with two divisions. Outside Paris, General Montaudan took Neuilly, Levallois, Perret, and Clichy; he also attacked St. Ouen. Later in the day, the Buttes Montmartre and the Northern Railway Station were carried by Generals Clinchamp and l'Admirault; the church of the Trinity was captured by General Douai; and large numbers of prisoners were taken. The insurrection was now almost entirely confined, on the north side, to the irregular quadrilateral formed by the Tuileries, the Seine, the Prefecture of Police, the Hôtel de Ville, and the interior Boulevards.

The insurgents, however, were determined to defend their last stronghold to the utmost of their power. When M. Vésinier saw how disastrous were the results of the fighting which ensued on the entry of the troops, he proceeded to the meeting-place of the Engineer Division, and drew up a plan of the barricades necessary for the defence of La Villette, Belleville, Ménilmontant, and Charonne. The roads leading to this native land of revolution were very insufficiently barricaded, so that the position was completely open to the advance of an army moving along the fortifications, and could be forced from the front, and taken in the rear. The system of barricades suggested by M. Vésinier was agreed to; auxiliary labourers were at once set to work erecting the defences; and in a short time the insurgents were enabled to present a fresh series of obstacles to the invading troops. All the streets in the vicinity of Belleville and its sister suburbs were blocked by enormous barricades. "Some of them," writes M. Vésinier, "were veritable redoubts, armed with artillery, and guarded by devoted National Guards. Those near the Porte de Romainville and the post-barracks of Bastion 18, and those at the bottom of the Rue des Lilas, near Bastions 21 and 22, were very strong, and armed with rampart cannons. Above the American quarries, near the Rue des Lilas, was a battery of heavy pieces, commanding the strategical rampart road to the Porte de Pantin, and defending the passage of the canal and La Villette basin, the bridges of which were mined. On the other side, between Bastion 10, at the Porte de Vincennes, and Bastion 19, at the Porte de Romainville, solid barricades, armed with 24-pounders, intercepted the rampart road at the angles of the Rue St. Fargeau, in front of the Portes de Ménilmontant, Bagnolet, Montreuil, and Vincennes, in such a manner as to prevent the enemy wheeling round the old suburbs, and taking them in rear. These works secured the defenders of La Villette, Belleville, Ménilmontant, Buttes Chaumont, and Père la Chaise, against surprise; they protected their rear, and would save them from a general massacre."* The barricades thus hastily but elaborately constructed proved as unable to stay the progress of the military as those which had been thrown up just within the *enceinte*. The only thing which at that time could have saved the insurgents from the retribution which was about to fall on them, and which was doubtless characterised by some frightful excesses, was a surrender of all their positions and the whole of their forces into the hands of the national troops. Every chance of success, even the faintest, had utterly disappeared. It was simply impossible that the feeble, shattered, and disorganised ranks of the Communists could overcome the immense and highly-disciplined army which had now established itself in the greater part of Paris; and to continue the struggle under such circumstances was simply to indulge a spirit of diabolical defiance, which, rather than yield, would involve Paris in ruin, and shed rivers of blood in a fratricidal contest from which nothing whatever could be hoped.

The fighting on the 23rd was of the most desperate character. Many of the National Guards were excessively intoxicated, and in that condition exposed themselves more than they probably would have done had they been sober. On the other hand, the Government troops were very cautious in their operations, and availed themselves as much as possible of any cover they could find. The inhabitants of the houses in the principal streets were ordered by the insurgents to close their windows, but to keep their jalousie-blinds open, in order that Government sympathisers might not have an opportunity of firing down on the Communals below. Strange to say, the latter made no attempt themselves to occupy the houses, as positions of offence against the regular troops; and accordingly the military, as they advanced, took possession of the windows, and did a great deal of execution in the rebel ranks. In the Rue Rochechouart, some National Guards were fired upon from a house; they entered it, and at once executed the persons found there with arms in their hands. The tocsin was ringing all the morning; shot and shel rained almost incessantly over the greater part of the city; passers-by, even including foreigners, were forced by the insurgents to fight in their cause; and women, maddened by the diabolical excitement of the hour, descended from the heights

* "History of the Commune of Paris."

of Montmartre, armed with muskets, to assist in the defence of the barricades. Some of the most determined combatants, indeed, were to be found among these unsexed creatures, many of whom were dressed as National Guards, or as sailors. The streets were strewn with public archives and other papers, which were blown to and fro with the shock of artillery. The Ministry of Finance was on fire, and in the midst of flame, smoke, and the roar of heavy guns, the deadly struggle went on without a pause.

The taking of the New Opera House was a very difficult and sanguinary affair, for the Communists at that point fought unusually well. They were taken in front, in rear, and in flank, but still offered a determined resistance. The troops, following their tactics of exposing themselves as little as possible, burst their way from house to house, and fired from above—sometimes even from the fifth storeys. Many of these shots were wasted; but, the infantry being out of the way, the street was left free for the cannon and mitrailleuses, which did terrific execution. Barricade after barricade was taken by the Government troops, who also possessed themselves of the barracks in the Rue de Faubourg Poissonnière. The Communists, however, still continued to fight with desperate courage; but at length the regulars carried the New Opera House, and the tricolour flag again waved from its walls. Shortly afterwards, a soldier got a ladder, mounted to the statue of Apollo on the front of the theatre, and tore down the red flag of the Commune attached to it. At this spot the Special Correspondent of the *Daily News* saw an incident which was singularly French in its character. "A little grig of a fellow in red breeches"—one of the soldiers of the Line—ran forward to the corner of the Rue Halévy in the Boulevard Haussmann, took up his post behind a tree, and fired along the Boulevard towards the Rue Taitbout. "He fired with an air; he loaded with an air; he fired again with a flourish, and was greeted with cheering and clapping of hands. Then he beckoned dramatically, for he meditated firing up the Rue Lafayette, but changed his mind, and blazed away again up Haussmann. Then he turned and waved on his fellows as if he were on the boards of a theatre, the Federal bullets cutting the bark and leaves all around him." A few moments more, and he was struck down. A bullet had passed through his forehead, and he was dead.

When the troops had carried the positions in the vicinity of the New Opera House, the civilians, who had been looking on, came out of their dwellings, and expressed the utmost delight at the result. Everybody seemed wild with joy. People laughed, sang, and danced in the exhilaration of the moment. Communist cards of citizenship were openly torn up; bottles of wine were pressed on the soldiers; women hugged them; men put money into their hands; the tricolour was displayed everywhere, and shouts of "Long live the Line!" rang through the air. The discipline of the troops is described as admirable. They were soon recalled to their places, and, forming in companies, they poured down—a mighty army, consisting of horse, foot, and artillery—through the Chaussée d'Antin, across the Great Boulevard (where, after much fighting, they took the insurgents in flank), and along the Rue de la Paix towards the Place Vendôme. Many of the houses were much battered by the shells; but the damage might have been much worse. The Communists had an artillery-barricade at the top of the Rue St. Honoré, in the Rue Royale. The army were now at the Corps Législatif, and a prolonged contest at this spot was maintained between the two sides. From the Rue St. Honoré, the Place Vendôme, and the neighbourhood of the Palais Royal and the Hôtel de Ville, came the never-ceasing sound of cannon and musketry. Thus the evening waned into the night, and still the struggle continued, and the fury of destruction knew no pause.

M. Vésinier, following the events of the same day (May 23rd), says that the Communists stationed on the Buttes Montmartre (which were armed with two hundred cannons, and commanded the whole of Paris) threw bombs and shells into the enemy's positions at the Champ de Mars, the Trocadero, &c., which were thus rendered almost untenable. The principal approaches to Montmartre were blocked with formidable barricades, mounted with cannon and mitrailleuses; but at some points the position was entirely undefended. The officers and Committee of War charged with the defence of these high grounds had supposed they could not be attacked from the rear, which was therefore neglected. This proved to be an error, of which the Government generals availed themselves. Marshal MacMahon's report on the taking of the position said:—

"The barricades and batteries of the heights of Montmartre being directed against the south and interior of Paris, the best plan of attack was to wheel round these defences, and gain the same elevation on the opposite side. General l'Admirault was to attack on the north-east, and General Clinchamp on the west.

"At four o'clock in the morning, the attacking party began moving. The Grénier Division, marching along the fortifications, dislodged the enemy from the bas-

tions, and with the greatest spirit overthrew all obstacles. Having arrived at the top of the Rue Mercadet, the Abbatucci Brigade pursued its march to the Boulevards Bessières and Ney, took the barricades of the Porte de Cligancourt and the Northern Railway-bridge, and gained the goods station, when it wheeled to the right in order to reach the Buttes by the Rues des Poissonniers and Lubat. On arriving at the Rue Mercadet, it found itself arrested in its course in a quarter bristling with barricades, between the railway and the Boulevard Ornano.

"The Pradié Brigade, which had followed the Rue Mercadet, advanced slowly under a strong fire from the heights and cemetery of Montmartre, which it only entered after the greatest efforts.

"The Laveaucoupet Division marched along the fortifications, and reached the Rues des Senelles and Mont Cenis, by which it tried to arrive at the heights of Montmartre.

"The Fifth Corps, that of Clinchamp, following the Boulevard des Batignolles and the streets running parallel with it, took the Mairie of the Seventeenth Arrondissement and the great barricade at the Place Clichy, and, marching along the foot of the heights, overcame all obstacles, and penetrated into the cemetery by the south, at the same moment that the First Corps entered on the north.

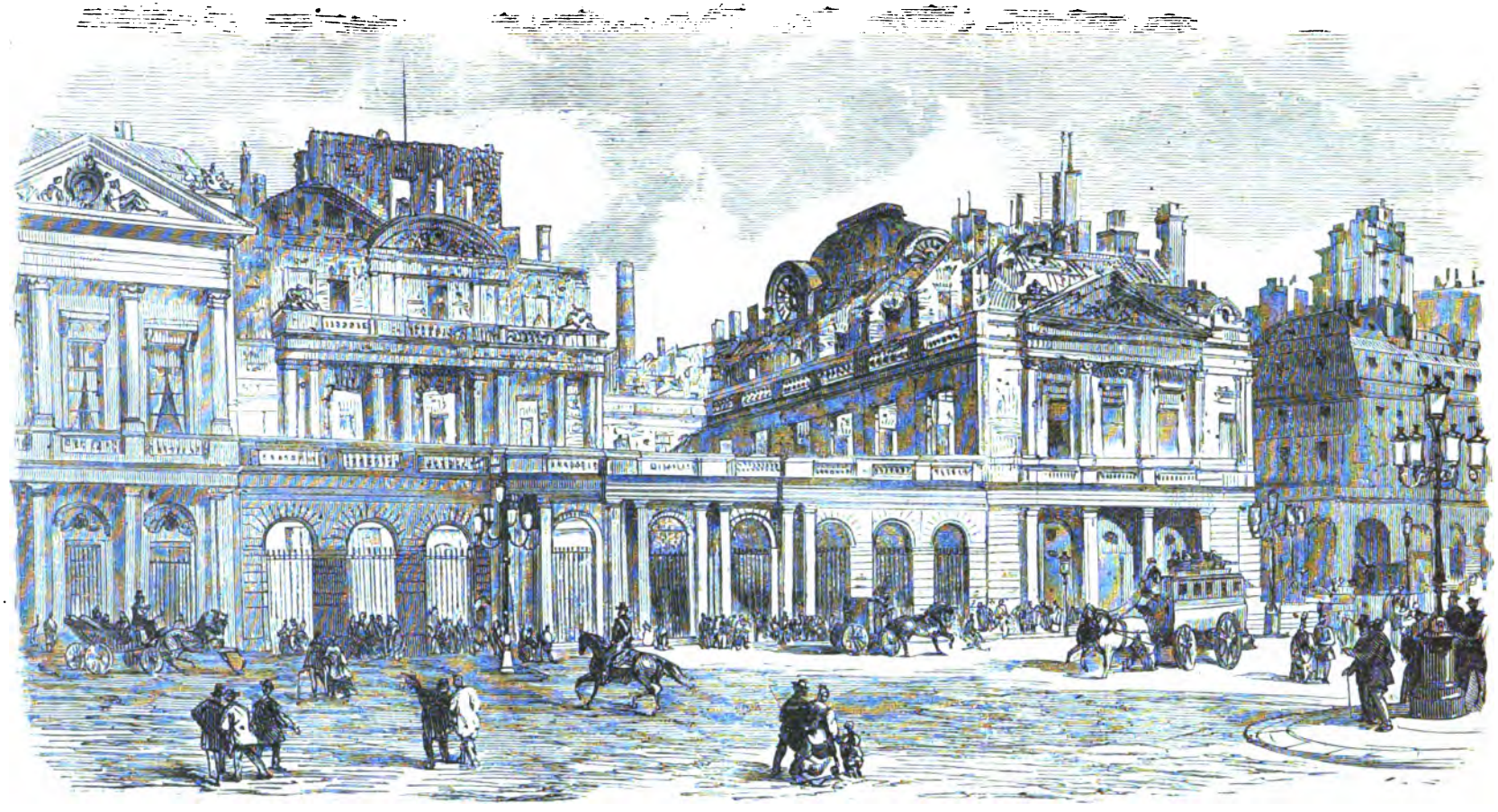
"At that moment the heights of Montmartre were surrounded on the north and west by the troops of the First and Fifth Corps, and a general attack was made through all the streets running parallel with the slope. The Clinchamp Corps, advancing through the Rue Lepic, took the Mairie of the Eighteenth Arrondissement. The Pradié Brigade of the First Corps, at the head of which were the volunteers of the Seine, arrived first at Moulin de la Galette; and soon afterwards a company of the 10th Battalion of Chasseurs, supported by a vigorous attack from General Wolff, hoisted the tricolour on the Solferino Tower. It was one o'clock.

"We were masters of the great fortress of the Commune, the heart of the insurrection—a formidable position, from which the insurgents could cover all Paris with their fire. More than a hundred cannons, with considerable stores of arms and ammunition, fell into our hands."

The barricades of the Barrière Clichy were defended by the Communists, according to their official historian, with much courage, and the Government troops were obliged to fight a murderous engagement before they could obtain the mastery of them. The extempore fortification in the Place Blanche stood for four hours. Its capture was followed by that of the Place Pigalle, which did not resist quite so long; but the military had then to subdue one that had been thrown up in the Rue de Cligancourt. This would probably have given them a good deal of trouble, had it not been turned by the taking of the Buttes Montmartre. "Summary executions, domiciliary visits, and arrests," says M. Vésinier, "immediately commenced. All National Guards found with arms in their possession were massacred. The prisoners were marched to Château Rouge, or to No. 6, Rue des Rosiers, *into the same garden in which, two months before, Generals Lecomte and Clément Thomas were shot.*" There was a species of poetical justice in this which is very striking; and we could have no more fitting chronicler of the circumstance than M. Vésinier, the "Delegate of the *Official Journal*," who, while not daring to justify the assassination of the two generals, had nevertheless done his best to palliate and gloss over that atrocious fact.

As soon as the Government troops got possession of the Buttes Montmartre, they erected several batteries, with which they were enabled to threaten the city lying at their feet. Many of the principal positions were now in the hands of the military, and, whenever they attacked, the insurgents were compelled to give way. The Place St. Pierre, at which there was an enormous barricade, was turned on the rampart side, and attacked in front, so that its defenders were obliged to abandon it. The crossway of the Croix Rouge was not taken until late at night; nor were the barricades in the Rues Martignac and Belle Chasse. But they fell ultimately before the assaults of the regular army; and the Rue de Grenelle St. Germain, the Ministries of War and Public Works, and the Telegraph Office, were also occupied by the troops. The barricades at the top of the Rue de Rennes, and those of the Boulevard Montparnasse, at the angle of the Rue Vavin, having been taken, General Levassor-Sorval advanced his attacking party to the Luxembourg; and when night closed in, the whole of the western half of Paris, both on the northern and southern banks of the Seine, was in full possession of the Government forces.

It was in the course of this day (Tuesday, the 23rd) that Dombrowski was killed at the Ornano barricade. The general results of the day's fighting were decidedly in favour of the Government troops; and the Communists, having lost nearly all the buildings in which the departmental work of their government was carried on, were obliged to concentrate their various head-quarters at the Hôtel de Ville. Yet the National Guards had, on the whole, exhibited a determined front, and inflicted considerable losses on the attacking force. "The Parisian," wrote Rossel, "recovers in the war of barricades the vigour in which he is deficient in defending ramparts, or in open warfare. The possibility of taking flight, and escaping the consequences of defeat by going home, only to resume his arms at a convenient moment, gives him the same feeling of



RUINS OF THE PALAIS ROYAL.

safety which regular troops derive from the 'shoulder to shoulder,' and the companionship under their flag. It is not a paradox to say that the uniform deprives the rioter of a portion of his courage. The men in blouses have more energy, more dash, and more military valour than the National Guards, and especially than the officers." On the other hand, this "possibility of taking flight," and escaping to the not distant home, whenever the pressure of the enemy became serious, led in several instances to an ignominious and precipitate retirement from the conflict on the part of those who were bound, by fidelity to their cause, to stand their ground as long as they could. Still, the defence was not wanting in courage, though it was the courage of desperation, and often of drunkenness. The wine-merchants were required to furnish drink for nothing; and thus, in an orgie of blood and debauchery, the dreadful 23rd of May wore on, and passed into a night more dreadful still, in which it might almost have seemed as if the end of Paris had arrived.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

The Game played out—Desperate Resolve of the Communists—Paris in Flames—The Morning of the 24th of May—Designs of the Communists—The Evidence against them—Female Incendiaries—Frequent use of Petroleum in the Conflagration of Paris—The Methods of Procedure—Order of the Committee of Public Safety for the Burning of the City—List of Buildings Destroyed and Saved—Continued Fighting—Further Successes of the Government Troops—The Communists in their last Stronghold—The Struggle in the North of Paris—End of the Rebellion—Charges made by the Commune against the Versaillese—Frightful Atrocities—Street Executions—Deliberate Butcheries—Danger of Pestilence—The Camp at Satory—Miserable Condition of the Prisoners—Attempted Revolt—The Paris Press on the Commune—Circular of Jules Favre on the Treatment of Refugees—Conduct of Belgium and other Foreign Powers—The Germans and the Fugitive Communists—Marshal MacMahon and the Insurgents—The Law of Vengeance.

THE game was played out. The desperate throw had been made, and had failed. The worst had been dared, and it had come. Left unsupported by the provinces—distrusted, hated, and scorned by the majority even of Parisians—hemmed in on all sides by a victorious and irresistible army—beaten out of its strongest positions in the fight that had been raging for three days—its strength dissipated by internal divisions, its projects marred by personal jealousies—humiliated, but not repentant—convicted, but not ashamed—its heart filled with all evil, its hands powerless to do aught but infernal wickedness—the Commune, driven at length to bay, took counsel of its desperation and its guilt, and resolved that the city which it could neither rule nor hold should perish with itself. This fanatical and felonious Government, denying society, denying tradition, denying morals, denying God—rending the Republic it professed to serve, and desolating the Paris it assumed to worship—now turned in drunken rage and furious madness on its pursuers, and prepared to do the last mischief it was able to accomplish. If Paris could no longer be dominated, it might at least be burnt. If the soldiers of Versailles could not be conquered, the helpless adherents of Versailles might at any rate be assassinated. A movement which had commenced with murder and sedition might well terminate in conflagration and in blood.

The night of the 23rd of May, and early morning of the 24th, were characterised by circumstances of horror such as the history of modern times can scarcely parallel. The Government batteries continued to bombard the positions still held by the Communists, especially the Hôtel de Ville; and during the dark hours a lurid glare started up from the very heart of Paris, and it was manifest, even to outside observers, that some of the grandest and most interesting buildings of the city were in flames. Driven to their last stand, the Communists replied to the batteries of the Government by as steady a fire as their own batteries could produce. But it was not the guns which worked the greatest damage. The Communists had sworn that, sooner than relinquish Paris, they would destroy it. Cluseret, as already related at p. 341 of this volume, had declared, in a letter from New York, written during February, 1870, that when the day of the Communists arrived, Paris would be theirs, or Paris would cease to be. In the final moments of the Commune, a little before the entry of the Versailles troops, the newspapers and adherents of the Red Republic openly declared that Paris should be annihilated rather than surrendered; and, after the conflagrations, the *Liberté* of Brussels, an organ of the Red Republicans, boasted that the Commune had destroyed Monarchical Paris, and rendered it unfit for a Monarchical capital. It is said that

the question was debated in the Communal Council, whether the town should be blown up or burnt; that preparations for the former catastrophe were actually made; that mines were laid from the Hôtel de Ville to the Louvre; and that among the papers of the Communists were discovered plans for conducting wires through the great sewers, which, by an arrangement of galvanic batteries, should communicate with depôts of picrate of potash, in order that the whole city, at a moment's notice, might be hurled into the air. This scheme, however, was probably found difficult of accomplishment, if not absolutely impossible; and so the alternative of fire, aided by petroleum, was resorted to. Colonel Rossel, in his "Posthumous Papers," avers that the fires took place "under the protection of the Federals," and that the majority of the Commune were justly chargeable with these crimes. "Félix Pyat and the Blanquists," he says, "were their instigators. On the 23rd, Félix Pyat opened his newspaper with an article, entitled, 'What shall we do with the Tuileries?' The victors were already in Paris, and the scoundrel was thinking more of avenging defeat than of snatching success from the enemies of the Revolution." Rossel had a strong feeling of personal antagonism to Pyat; but his evidence on this point is so much in harmony with other statements, that we have no reason for doubting it.

"We have petroleum," said a female speaker at one of the political club-meetings described in Chapter XXXIII. of the present volume; and in fact it appears that the chief agents in the firing of Paris were women. It is highly probable—indeed, it is more than probable—that several of the stories told about the doings of the *pétroleuses* were fanciful, or at least exaggerated; but there is so much concurrent testimony to the effect that women were employed for this diabolical purpose, and the allegation is so strongly confirmed by threats unquestionably uttered by the Communists previously to the entrance of the troops, that it would be the very affectation of scepticism to deny it. The Paris correspondent of the *Guardian* was informed that women had poured petroleum into the cellars where unfortunate wretches were hiding, with the avowed intention of burning them out; and in the cellars of the house No. 2, Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré, seven persons were found suffocated with the fumes of that inflammable fluid. Several women were said to have been caught by the Government troops in the act of throwing little bottles of picrate of potash, or petroleum-balls, down cellar-gratings; and were shot on the instant for the attempt. According to accounts subsequently given of the state of the ruins, there were unmistakable evidences of the walls having been prepared with petroleum for the action of the flames. The Mint—one of the buildings that were saved—was actually found saturated with this terrific agent of destruction; the Luxembourg was being washed with it when the troops arrived; and large quantities of the same fluid were discovered in the cellars of the New Opera House, and in a sewer near the Luxembourg. M. Picard stated in the National Assembly that the insurgents on the Buttes Chaumont sent a perfect hail of petroleum-shells towards the Versailles troops; and several of these shells were discovered in positions abandoned by the rebels. Eight insurgents were caught pouring petroleum on the floors of the Ministry of Marine, and three women were seized as they were throwing petroleum-bombs in the Faubourg St. Honoré. A woman was arrested on the 24th near the Rue du Bac, and it was found that she had several bottles of petroleum slung round her by means of a belt fastened underneath her dress. As all such persons were at once shot without trial (according to the custom of troops in the crisis of an assault), there is of course a want of judicial verification of the facts; but the collateral evidence in support of these statements is exceedingly strong. The Special Correspondent of the *Daily News* said of the incendiaries:—

"They set to work in three distinct ways. In the palaces and public offices which they commanded, they disposed, at regular intervals, sometimes bottles, sometimes pots of petroleum. When the vessels of petroleum were arranged at proper distances, one of them would be overturned and ignited; the flames would rapidly spread, and the whole building would soon be past salvation. It was in this way that the Tuileries, the Palais Royal, the Hôtel de Ville, the Palace of the Legion of Honour, and other celebrated public edifices, were set in flames. This arrangement was also made in the Ministry of Marine; but the wretches engaged in the work of destruction had to fly before they could set fire to the pots of petroleum which they had planted in the most likely corridors. There was a second method adopted for the destruction of private houses. When it became necessary to retire from a particular barricade, the Guards tore to pieces the beds which formed part of the barricades; took the tow out of their beds, dipped it in petroleum, and loaded their guns with it. Then they fired the tow into the windows of the houses. It was in this way that the block of houses in the Rue Royale, facing the Madeleine, was set on fire. Still a third method: men and women were going about Paris with bottles of petroleum in their pockets, or hid about their dresses. They threw these bottles down into the ground-floors of every dwelling they could get at. If there was no room for the bottle to get through, the neck of the

bottle could get into certain air-holes which belong to the construction of French houses; the liquid would be poured in, and a lighted match would be sent in after it. In this way very many private houses were set in flames; and many hundreds of women were taken in the act all day—some being shot upon the spot. All day, too, the inhabitants, apprised of what was going on, were engaged in stopping up all the sky-lights, gratings, and air-holes which connected their ground-floors with the pavements. Wherever you turned—in every street—you saw the inhabitants busy plastering, bricking, or shutting up with planks the two feet of their houses next to the pavement. Not only were women taken, but the firemen also in great numbers were arrested. The fact is that many adherents of the Commune entered the ranks of the firemen, partly to disguise themselves, and partly to spread the fire instead of extinguishing it.

"The part which the women play in this business is remarkable. It was no idle boast of M. Allix when he proposed to create a legion of Amazons of the Seine ready to fight. The women of Paris have been taking a very active part in the operations. Some, with their muskets, mount the barricades, and fire on the enemy with undoubted courage. Others go about as destroying fiends with bottles of petroleum. Others again—at least in the quarter of the Madeleine—get into talk with the soldiers, sit down to drink with them, and, it is said, poison their cups. Others, too, have been known to poignard the soldiers, or any Versaillese who may present a good chance."

The story with respect to the firemen was alluded to by a correspondent of the *Times*, who alleged that some of the persons working the engines actually pumped petroleum into the flames instead of water. It was also related by a writer in the same paper that he met a group of young shop-women being led through the streets to execution, for having inveigled a company of soldiers within their doors, and poisoned them in wine. That there was an organised corps of female incendiaries, working by means of petroleum, may be doubtful; at any rate, the existence of such a corps was never proved, and a Paris correspondent of the *Times* said that it existed only in the imagination of journalists. But it seems clear, from numerous statements on the subject made by various writers who were in a position to be well-informed, that numerous women contributed to the conflagrations by the aid of explosive oils, and it is certain that they acted on behalf of the expiring Commune. The complicity of the leaders of the Commune in the burning of Paris is proved by a document found on the body of Delescluze after he had fallen at the barricade where he was commanding. This document consisted of a set of directions to the chief insurgents with respect to the conflagrations which had been resolved on. It said:—

"Citizen Millière, at the head of 150 fusee-bearers, will set fire to the suspected houses and public monuments on the left bank. Citizen Dereure, with 100 *fusées*, is to act in the 1st and 2nd Arrondissements. Citizen Billioray with 100 men is to take charge of the 9th, 10th, and 20th Arrondissements. Citizen Vésinier, with fifty men, is specially charged with the Boulevards from the Madeleine to the Bastille. The citizens must concert with the commanders of barricades to ensure the execution of these orders.

"Paris, 3rd Prairial, year 79."

This document was signed by the members of the Committee of Public Safety, at the head of whom stood the name of Delescluze. It will have been observed that, according to Rossel, the instigators of these crimes were Félix Pyat and the adherents of Blanqui. Rossel thought highly of the abilities and character of Delescluze; yet the latter seems to have been willing to give his sanction and authority to this devilish scheme. "Citizen Vésinier," who was charged with the destruction of that part of the Boulevards situated between the Madeleine and the Bastille, observes a discreet silence with reference to this document, though he gives a minute account of the appearance of Delescluze after death, and of what he had about him. The official historian must have been aware of the statement that such a paper had been found on the corpse of Delescluze; and it is not likely that he would have refrained from denying its authenticity, had he been able to do so. As that authenticity was not disproved, the charge against the Communists, that they wilfully set fire to Paris when they found they could no longer hold it against the Government troops, rests on evidence of their own creation.

The chief historical and public buildings burnt in those terrible days were the Tuileries, the Louvre (partially), the Palais Royal (partially), the Palace of the Legion of Honour, the Hôtel de Ville, the Prefecture of Police, the Ministry of Finance, the Audit Office, the Council of State, the Lyons Station, the Grenier d'Abondance, the Mairie of the 4th Arrondissement, and some theatres and barracks. Of private houses, so many were destroyed that parts of the city presented nothing but a spectacle of long lines of ruins, as if the place had been visited by a tremendous earthquake. Several buildings, moreover, were greatly damaged with shot and shell; but there were also some surprising escapes. The first reports made out the destruction to be worse than it really was. It was feared that the grand old cathedral of Notre Dame had perished, and that the Museum of the Louvre had been swept away. But the former proved to be untouched, and the art treasures of the latter had been pre-

viously removed to a place of safety. The Library of the Louvre, however, was destroyed. Although the Ministry of Finance was burnt, the "Grand Livre" of France—a series of nearly three thousand volumes, containing the inscriptions of the Public Debt of the country, from the commencement of that debt down to the present time—had fortunately been taken out of the building the day before. The Ministry of Marine and the Bibliothèque Nationale were saved by a mere chance. As they were just on the point of being destroyed, Admiral Pothuan and his sailors came on the incendiaries, and put them all to the sword. The Institute and the Mazarin Library had an equally narrow escape. The celebrated Gobelin Factory was preserved; but the tapestry and frames in the great workshop were lost. The Pantheon was to be blown up on the 24th, and for some hours women and children were pouring out of the quarter of the city in which it stands; but it would appear that the insurgents had an insufficient quantity of powder for the contemplated design; at any rate, the building remained unharmed.

These terrible conflagrations began during the night of the 23rd of May; but they continued several days, and in some parts the ruins smouldered and glowed with inward fire after the worst was over. The weather on the 24th was beautiful. A bright blue sky looked down upon the bloody and flaming city, and the sunlight of early summer was golden over all the desolated place. But as the day advanced, and the fires grew more numerous, a pall of inky smoke stained the radiance of heaven, shut out the glad aspects of the season, and hung like night above the scene of fratricidal conflict. From time to time this wide obscurity of thick and sulphurous clouds was shaken by explosions; and the roar of artillery, the whizzing of shells, and the bicker of small arms, would come from the centre of that infernal darkness, telling of the progress of the struggle, as MacMahon's soldiers slowly won their way from point to point, and trampled out the Commune in the midst of its own flames. The fighting was less continuous on the 24th than it had been on the previous day; yet there were some desperate encounters. The Place Vendôme was taken at two in the morning; the Hôtel de Ville was bombarded by the Versaillese batteries, and a heavy fire was opened on the surrounding barricades. It was this incessant bombardment which gave the Communists occasion for saying that the burning of Paris was due to the Government forces themselves. There was no ground for such a charge, however; and it should be borne in mind that the Communists were bombarding the military, as much as the latter the former. Even, therefore, if in some instances public or private buildings should have been set on fire by a chance shell, it does not follow that that shell came from the batteries of the regular army. But the evidence in support of the charge against the Communal leaders, that they wilfully prepared and originated the terrible series of conflagrations, is too strong to allow of any other explanation. The insurgents fought desperately within their circle of fire and smoke; but the soldiers of the Line everywhere prevailed. The Luxembourg and the Pantheon fell into the hands of General Cissy, and their defenders were at once shot, and buried in the gardens of the former edifice. Near this spot, Raoul Rigault was executed; and the troops then proceeded to arrest his father, who, according to M. Vésinier, had never taken any part in politics. He was afterwards liberated, however, and allowed to disinter his son's body from the gardens of the Luxembourg.

The invading army also took, on the 24th, the Bank, the Bourse, the Conservatory of Music, the Exchange, the Porte St. Denis, Montholon Square, St. Vincent de Paul, and the stations of the Northern and Strasbourg Railways. The Hôtel de Ville was taken at nine in the evening, but it was in flames. M. Vésinier says that "a gunboat at the Quai de Grève had literally riddled it with shells." This partisan writer gives a description of what he witnessed on the evening of the 24th from the Belleville heights, and charges the Government with having deliberately, from multitudinous batteries, and for a long series of hours, scattered fire over Paris—fire which burnt with an intensely brilliant white light, and spread with an awful rapidity. He admits that the projectiles of the Communists caused some disasters; but he asserts that they were few in comparison, because for every shot of the National Guards, the military fired ten. A correspondent of the *Daily News*, however, stated that several thousands of the insurgents took refuge in the Cemetery of Père la Chaise, from which, and the Buttes Chaumont, they shelled the centre of Paris; and another recorded that the holders of the Hôtel de Ville "poured out death and destruction over Paris in miscellaneous wildness." It was evident that the Commune determined to die hard. The insurgents made a desperate stand in the church of St. Eustache, near the Halles Centrales. They had planted cannon and mitrailleuses inside the church, and lost many of their number before the position was relinquished. The survivors then fled up the Rue Turbigo to the Château d'Eau, in the

barracks of which they entrenched themselves, and continued the struggle.

The battle continued to rage with great fury on the 25th. On that day, Forts Montrouge, Bicêtre, and Ivry, and the redoubts of Hautes Bruyères and Villejuif, were taken by the Government troops. Up to the previous day, Montrouge had thrown many shells into Paris, so that its capture was a great gain to the attacking forces. In the city itself, the fighting on the 25th was chiefly in the neighbourhood of the Bastille, the Barrière du Trône, Père la Chaise, and the Buttes de Chaumont. The advance of the troops was very striking on this day. It is stated by M. Vésinier that, on the left or southern bank of the Seine, they captured the Barrière d'Italie, the Buttes aux Cailles, the station of the Orleans Railway, the Jardin des Plantes, and the Halle aux Vins; and that, on the opposite bank, the station of the Lyons Railway, Mazas, the Grenier d'Abondance, the national printing-office, the Place du Château d'Eau, the Prince Eugène Barracks, and the Arts and Trades Square, were occupied. By the evening, the whole of the left bank was lost to the Commune, and the army advanced by the right bank to Bastion 33, near the Porte de la Chapelle. All the low ground was now in possession of the Government; but the heights were still held by the insurgents, who strongly entrenched themselves in the northern parts of the city. On the 26th, the Place de la Bastille was turned on the east, and the avenues, boulevards, and streets abutting on it were occupied by the troops of the Line, who shortly afterwards took the Place itself, the Place du Trône, and that of the Villette Rotunda. Other divisions at the same time pushed forward, by way of the fortifications, as far as the St. Denis Canal. A correspondent of the *Times*, describing one of the battles of this day, said that it was singular to observe the crowds of non-combatants — men, women, and children—who went close up to the barricades between the two lines of fire, as if from mere curiosity. Presently, a Staff colonel, studying a map of Paris, with a view to strategical operations, would give his men the word to begin, and both sides would soon be hotly engaged. The proceedings of the regulars were systematically monotonous. Each man took a step forward, and, ex-



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posing himself as little as possible, fired up at the barricade; then fell back to re-load, and yielded his place to another. At first there were not more than about twenty soldiers at the particular spot which the writer was describing (the Rue d'Aboukir, near the Bourse); but, on reinforcements arriving, the colonel directed his men to enter some of the corner houses, and to throw up a counter-barricade in front of the enemy's. "To mount the houses," says the *Times* correspondent, "was easy enough, took it from above in flank. I was sometimes within a few feet of them, and was much struck by their coolness and military common sense, if I may use the expression. They did the work before them in a quiet, business-like way, in what, during the late war, was considered by some the best feature of Prussian fighting; not shirking risk when it was necessary, but, on the other hand, not needlessly exposing themselves for the sake of swagger." The insurgents also fought well; yet strange to say,



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though the door of one had to be broken in, and presently we heard glass tumbling down, as muzzles of rifles were poked through the upper panes, and soon sharp cracks and thick puffs of smoke leaping out showed that the men had settled down to their work. The barricade was a more difficult matter, as it had to be made full in front of the enemy's fire; but it was contrived with wonderful coolness and rapidity, the civilians about eagerly bringing stones. Two or three barrels appeared as if by magic. By pushing the barricade cautiously across the street, by lying down under cover of one bit as they built another, the regulars soon had cover enough to fire comparatively at ease straight up at the barricade, while their comrades at the windows nobody was killed, or even wounded, on the side of the army.

Belleville was attacked on the morning of the 26th, soon after daybreak. General Clinchamp approached it from the ramparts, and General Bruat's division simultaneously marched on the quarter from the direction of the Rue de Paris. The defence was very obstinate, and the troops had to take seven barricades in succession. After a while, the rebels offered to surrender, on condition that their lives were spared. This was peremptorily refused, and the struggle continued till the position was carried. Several cannons and twenty-two red flags fell to the lot of the victors, and a large number of the insurgents were despatched on the spot.

"An English Medical Student," who put forth some of his experiences of the last days of the Commune, says that the commander of a Belleville battalion with which he was serving was a rag-picker who had commanded a barricade in 1848. The men were good fighting men, though horrible blackguards and drunkards. This writer saw a battalion of women fighting, and firing admirably with Snider rifles. Among them were many pretty-looking young girls. "They fought like devils," says the medical student; "far better than the men; and I had the pain of seeing fifty-two shot down, even when they had been surrounded by the troops, and disarmed. I saw about sixty men shot at the same place as the women, at the same time. While Paris was blazing in the night, the cannon roaring, and the muskets rolling, a poor woman was crouching inside a cart, and crying bitterly. I offered her a glass of wine and a piece of bread. She refused it, saying, 'For the short time I have to live, I shall not need it.' I saw the poor woman about to be seized by four troopers. I heard the harsh voice of the commanding officer interrogating the woman, saying, 'You are brave—you have killed two of my men.' The woman laughed derisively, and responded, in a hardened manner, 'May the curse of the Almighty always rest upon my soul for not killing more! I had two sons at Issy, who were both killed, and two at Neuilly, who shared the same fate. My husband died at this barricade; and now do with me what you will.'" Their "will" was that she should die. The word of command was given, and the wretched creature was shot. A woman who ranges herself with combatants must perhaps share the fate of the men; but there was no deeper tragedy in the whole civil war than the story of this poor fanatic.

The movement which had been commenced on the 26th was brought to a termination on the 27th. At four o'clock on the morning of the latter day, the troops opened fire on the insurgent positions from some new batteries which they had erected during the night on the metal road in front of the cattle-market, near the Ourcq Canal and Bastions 26 and 27. The projectiles reached the Rue des Lilas, where some of the houses were shattered or set on fire. What the military were now endeavouring to effect—chiefly by the Division of General l'Admirault—was to turn the remaining positions of the Communists, by attacking them in the rear of Ménilmontant and Belleville. Their successes of the previous day facilitated this design; but the contest was prolonged and difficult. It is asserted by M. Vésinier that the Federal batteries in position on the heights in front of the Rue des Lilas and at the Place des Prés St. Gervais silenced the Government batteries on the banks of the Ourcq Canal and the Villette Basin. While this was going on, the left wing of General l'Admirault's Division, commanded by General Pradié, advanced along the fortifications, and took shelter behind the railway, near the slaughter-house of La Villette. Here again, however, the Government troops would seem to have been checked. Pradié therefore abandoned for the moment his turning movement by the ramparts, and attacked the Buttes Chaumont in front. The Dumont Brigade, however, turned the Villette Basin, and, after a series of successes, established itself in the market of the Rue de Meaux. At the same time, the Lefebvre Brigade, on the right wing, concentrated in the streets at the foot of the Buttes Chaumont; and the heights were carried after a sanguinary engagement. General Vinoy, about the same time, took the Cemetery of Père la Chaise, which was defended by a row of barricades and two batteries. The troops commenced the assault of this position from the large terraces commanding the exterior Boulevards. The defenders made use of the tombstones as covers; but the artillery of the regular army was so strong that the Communists were compelled to recede. The insurgents do not appear to have fought well at this spot. M. Vésinier himself records that the barricade which the Communal troops had erected just inside the large gate of the cemetery was taken by the Government forces ere their opponents had time to fire a shot. This he attributes to the fact that the holders of the barricade were "unaccustomed to handle cannon." The obstacle being thus easily overcome, the besiegers advanced into the cemetery, while other columns climbed the eminence on the north side and the side towards Charonne. Pressed from many directions, the insurgents fell back, and a last desperate stand was made in the highest part of the cemetery, at the foot of the Demidoff monument, where the largest batteries had been erected. The official historian of the Commune says that more than six thousand dead bodies strewed the avenues and tombs; and he adds an incredible statement—viz., that "many were murdered in the graves where they had sought shelter, and dyed the coffins with their blood." The same writer also passionately arraigns the victors for having, in the park on the north-eastern heights, committed the "infernal" atrocity of burning the dead bodies of their enemies. But, as he has just before stated that the inhabitants of the district, sympathisers with the Commune, were themselves "obliged to burn the bodies of the massacred National Guards in great numbers, in order to prevent infection by

their putrefying," it does not appear that the regular troops, supposing they acted as alleged, did anything more than take a justifiable precaution against disease. It is curious to observe that M. Vésinier cannot describe the killing of Communists in the ordinary course of a battle by any other term than "massacre," though he never dreams of applying the same phrase to the killing of Line soldiers by his own colleagues. But it is characteristic of demagogues that they always think the slaughtering should be done entirely by themselves.

The Mairie of the Twentieth Arrondissement was taken by General Lamariouse during the 27th; and batteries were erected in various positions, so as to enfilade the principal outlets by which the insurgents might have broken through the line of battle. The rebels were completely hemmed in. They had the troops of the Government on three sides, with the Prussians on the fourth; and the latter refused to allow any of them to pass. To prevent the possibility of the Communists escaping in that direction, the German outposts were pushed forward as close to the *enceinte* as they could be. The Mairie of the Eleventh Arrondissement was now the head-quarters of the insurrection; and some show of fighting was still kept up about that centre. But the National Guards were losing heart; their position had become quite untenable; and they began to surrender by thousands, and to abandon several barricades which they might have defended. The Government troops seized large quantities of arms, powder, shells, cartridges, and incendiary materials. Point after point they won their way to the last stronghold of the rebellion; and the end was now so near at hand that there could no longer be the slightest doubt as to the result.

When the night of May 27th closed over the scene of battle, the Communists, according to M. Vésinier, "were enclosed within the space of a few hundred mètres in width, and the distance from Bastion 15 to Bastion 21 in length, forming a segment of a circle. Supported by the fortifications, they were protected on the right by a strong barricade at Bastion 21, and by the Place des Fêtes, which was very strongly barricaded and heroically defended; on the left by the barricades of the Place des Trois Communes, the Rue des Tourelles, and the Porte Ménilmontant. On the east, the line of barricades extended to the Rue des Prés St. Gervais, Calais, and Bois. They were shut up within a triangle, the periphery of which was half a kilomètre; and in this confined space the battle lasted twenty-four hours." This appears to be an exaggeration; for the Mairie of the Eleventh Arrondissement, the last rallying-place of the insurgents, was stormed by the troops on the morning of Sunday, the 28th, and by four o'clock on that day the rebellion was utterly crushed out. Marshal MacMahon was enabled to telegraph to M. Thiers that he was absolute master of Paris, and to issue a proclamation to the inhabitants of the city, in which, with a slight touch of scorn, he said that the army of France had come to save them, that Paris was delivered, and that order, work, and security were about to revive.

A double cordon of troops was drawn round the town, to prevent the escape of insurgents; notwithstanding which, however, some managed to slip through. Several fires were still burning in various quarters, and M. Vésinier alleges that the Government troops continued, throughout the 27th and 28th, to cause fresh conflagrations by bombarding numerous localities with petroleum-bombs. The evidence of this writer, however, is too tainted to be of any value. Delescluze was killed at the barricades during the fighting on the 28th. He was struck down with five bullets, and sank beneath the burning beam of a house that was on fire. Age and a mortal malady had made him indifferent to life, and, mounting a barricade, with his head bare, his vest open, and no arms in his hands, he seems to have sought death as a refuge from further defeats and disappointments. He was a visionary and a dangerous fanatic; but he had a certain dignity of character which most of his companions lacked. Shortly before his death he had told his colleagues at the Hôtel de Ville that the cause of the Commune was utterly lost, and that the time had come for them to show that, having urged on others to fight and die, they were ready to do the same themselves. "For me," he said, "I feel that my last political struggle against Monarchy and Imperialism has come to an end. I shall die myself, I know; but I feel convinced that, for every drop of mine and of the Commune's blood, five men will one day spring forward to avenge us, and to establish in a few years that which, owing to our backward education, we have failed to establish now." Notwithstanding this earnestness and sincerity of nature, it is impossible to regard Delescluze otherwise than with feelings of abhorrence, as there appears no room to doubt that he was one of the persons chiefly responsible for the burning of a part of Paris. He was a great favourite, however, with the Red Republican party, and after his death it was feared that a movement might be started for exhuming his body, and giving him a public funeral, in the hope of exciting the population of the faubourgs. The corpse was accordingly dug

up, and buried secretly in quicklime. The Communists complained a good deal of this determination to obliterate the revolutionary leaders.

That the troops treated the vanquished with the most unmerciful severity cannot be questioned. On this point the testimony of M. Vésinier may be quoted for whatever it may be worth; and although there is no doubt that many of the details were in excess of the truth, it is in part confirmed by the personal observation of writers who were far from favourable to the insurgents. We find in his official "History of the Commune" the following frightful passage:—

"The old Mayors, on re-occupying their Mairies, instituted permanent courts-martial. The officers held their sittings surrounded by National Guards, defenders of order, and sentenced to death all the unfortunate suspected individuals who were brought before them. Terror and massacre were everywhere systematically organised on a gigantic scale. Blood ran in streams. All National Guards who had defended the Commune were shot. Soldiers penetrated into the houses, and massacred everybody; even the women and children were not spared.

"The barracks at the Place Lobau and the Châtelet were turned into slaughter-houses, where thousands of victims were sacrificed to the bloodthirsty tigers of Versailles. In these dens of crime, miserable officers, metamorphosed into executioners, sent the unfortunate victims, made prisoners by Bashi-Bazouks drunk with wine and blood, to execution. Not one found favour from these feeders of the courts-martial. All—men, women, and children—were pitilessly sent to death. Though blood flowed in streams, the executioners did not proceed fast enough for the gold-laced monsters. By the end of the day the massacre became so horrible, so atrocious and disgusting, that one of the paid assassin-colonels felt ashamed of his work, and, disgusted with his infamous *rôle*, refused any longer to continue sullying himself with the shedding of innocent blood, and demanded to be replaced, threatening to resign his commission. Another executioner, ambitious of donning the lace, stepped in to perform the execrable work. In the square near the Tour de St. Jacques a large ditch was dug, into which were thrown the still warm and quivering bodies of the victims, many of whom were yet alive. The living were buried with the dead. All night the neighbours heard agonising sobs, lamentations, and desperate appeals for help and pity. Fierce, half-tipsy sentinels, accomplices of assassins, without a spark of human feeling in them, mounted guard, and with a ferocious mien threatened with death any passer-by who dared to make the least appeal to their pity. Wives, daughters, and mothers, weeping and imploring pity for husbands, fathers, and sons, massacred and buried alive, were pitilessly and brutally beaten with bayonets and butt-ends of muskets. Ten thousand children were murdered."

The excess of phraseology which is a characteristic of M. Vésinier's style might in itself suggest some doubt as to the veracity of his assertions, were they not to a great extent supported by other and more reliable writers, and by what we know of the usual conduct of soldiers in a city which they have just taken after a desperate resistance. The statement that "ten thousand children were murdered" is no doubt an enormous exaggeration, or probably utterly baseless; but the horrible charge of burying the wounded alive, together with the dead, is supported by a relation to the same effect made in the *Indépendance Belge*, a paper strongly opposed to the Commune. However appalling the alleged fact, it is quite conceivable that it may have happened in the raging madness of those days.

The instances of arbitrary execution and inexcusable ferocity, related by the English newspaper correspondents, were numerous. A writer in the *Times*, describing the events of the 25th, spoke of the horrible effect produced by the angry ring of the volleys of execution, the strings of men and women hurried off to their doom, the curses of the populace, and the brutal violence of the soldiery. The civilians were to the full as savage as the troops. Those who but a few days before cowered beneath the dictation of Pyat, Delescluze, and their associates, and did not dare to lift a hand or utter a word in their own defence, now vied with each other in pointing out concealed Communists, and shouting for their immediate death. When files of prisoners were led through the streets, the crowd would frequently exclaim, "Shoot the wretches! Show them no mercy!" They struck them with canes, yelled at them, or laughed and made hideous jokes when one was shot down in cold blood. The soldiers and the people would sometimes coalesce, and literally beat the miserable wretches to death with sticks and the butt-ends of muskets—"beat them to death," as an observer related, "after the style in which cruel boys smash frogs and toads." An eminent advocate was shocked to see an officer draw his sword upon a woman who tried to leave a line of prisoners, slash her across the face, and hack off part of her shoulder. Another officer, of more humane disposition, was arrested for speaking against similar barbarity. In the Rue Rivoli, a correspondent of the *Times* saw a crowd approaching, headed by a company of mounted *gendarmes*, behind whom came two artillerymen dragging between them a woman who had been caught in the act of spreading petroleum. Her face was bleeding, her hair streaming down her back, and her clothes

torn to shreds; and, as she was dragged along, the bystanders showered blows on her. At the corner of the Louvre, the soldiers propped her up, already half-dead, against a wall; and the crowd ranged themselves round, to see the end of the tragedy. The recorder of this horrible incident says that the scene was complete in all its details: "the gasping, shrinking figure in the centre, surrounded by a crowd who could scarcely be kept from tearing her in pieces, who waved their arms, crying 'To the water, to the water!'—on one side a barricade, still strewn with broken guns and hats—a dead National Guard lying in the fosse—behind, a group of mounted *gendarmes*, and then a perspective of ruined streets and blackened houses, culminating, in the extreme distance, in the still-burning Hôtel de Ville." In another moment the woman fell forward in a pool of blood, struck dead by bullets from two revolvers.

The same writer relates that near the Parc Monceau a husband and wife were seized, and ordered to march forward towards the Place Vendôme, a distance of a mile and a half. Both were invalids, and unable to walk so far. The woman sat down on a kerbstone, and refused to go any farther. When the husband found that he could not prevail on her to move, the two knelt down, and begged the *gendarmes* to shoot them at once, if shot they were to be. The deadly favour was at once accorded. Twenty revolvers were fired, but the unhappy couple still breathed. A second discharge followed, and the *gendarmes* rode away, leaving them dead. The women were often treated with particular severity, because of the excessive ferocity which they had exhibited. On one occasion, a female colonel in a braided uniform was being driven through Versailles in a convoy of prisoners, and by her side was another woman, whom a *gendarme* goaded with his sabre till the blood ran. A bystander cried, "Shame to treat a woman so!" "Woman!" exclaimed the gendarme; "that woman, as you call her, killed my captain and lieutenant, and a sergeant, with three shots from her revolver." It was a customary thing to prick prisoners on the march with the point of the bayonet, either to accelerate their movements, or from sheer wanton cruelty. All were compelled to walk bareheaded in the hot sun, and not the slightest attention was paid to them if they required to rest. A correspondent of the *Daily News* saw a number of insurgents being conveyed to Satory, under command of a young captain, and avers that "one from fatigue, one from weakness, and two who were sulky, sat on a bank. The captain ordered them to get up directly, if they did not want to be shot. 'Shoot us,' replied one of the prisoners. 'I will take you at your word, my good fellow,' the captain answered, 'and I shall consider those who do not get up directly to be of the same mind as you.' No one moved. The firing party was quickly told off, and the four men were corpses in another instant. The captain was highly commended by his brother officers for his firmness." When one of four field-officers expressed a wish to see the prisoners handed over to the surgeons for vivisection, that thus they might be of some benefit to science, the other three applauded the idea. Outside the Madeleine Church, on one of the days of street fighting, a horrible scene occurred. A strong man, apparently in liquor, refused to continue his route. He was seized by four troopers, and dragged along the ground, amid the hoots and yells of the crowd, until an officer shot him through the head, just as the people were coming out of the Madeleine, with their missals in their hands. The crowd shrieked "Hurrah, hurrah!" with the exception of one man, who gave vent to an exclamation of horror, and was immediately seized by the soldiers, and dragged away. Among the prisoners were several children, not more than twelve years of age, and they appear to have been treated much as their elders were. The prisoners captured at barricades were generally shot off-hand, and even those who were reserved for trial stood a very good chance of being slaughtered meanwhile on the slightest provocation.

The correspondent of the *Morning Post* added his testimony to that of other journalists with reference to the cruelties practised by the soldiers. He related that in the Rue Royale he saw a number of Sapeurs Pompiers (firemen) being marched along under a guard of three soldiers. A few minutes before, they had been engaged putting out the fire at the corner of the Rue du Faubourg de St. Honoré; but it would seem that they had been accused of pumping petroleum on to the flames. One of the Sapeurs marched in front, and by his side walked a man in an official uniform, who reviled him unceasingly, snapped his fingers in his face, and directed the attention of the crowd to him. After a time, the Sapeur turned round and expostulated; the crowd shouted, "Shoot him! he refuses to march;" and the soldiers advanced, raising their rifles. "At this moment," says the writer, "the unfortunate man, believing that he was about to be shot—a belief which I have no reason to doubt was perfectly well-founded—moved hastily to one side to avoid the levelled rifles, and then, in despair, took to his heels. The Sapeur rushed past me down the street towards the Rue St. Honoré. I

looked after him fascinated with horror; escape was impossible; he could never have contemplated it; his flight was simply the involuntary act of a man trying to avoid being shot down in cold blood. His pursuers followed close behind with chassepôts levelled, and, just as he approached the Rue St. Honoré, some one threw himself against him, and overturned him in the street. His pursuers came up, and he was bayoneted on the spot. Meanwhile, the two remaining Sapeurs, who had been quietly accompanying their keepers, were equally driven to



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take flight by a cold-blooded proposal to shoot them, lest they also should attempt to escape. They ran down a little alley passing out of the Rue Royale, and immediately after I heard two shots, which told me that all was over. A minute afterwards I saw them lying dead. Of their guilt or innocence I know nothing, and for that matter neither did their executioners." This case, however, was not so bad as some; for the flight of the Sapeurs was certainly presumptive evidence of a design to escape, and probably the soldiers of most armies would have acted in the same way under the like circumstances. The readiness with which the guilt of any suspected person was assumed was the most terrible element in these executions. Every soldier was at liberty to inflict the penalty of death on any one he chose to denounce; and the populace, including the women, who were often the most remorseless, were only too willing to abet and encourage the actions of the military. The Government seemed determined to strike terror into the malcontents by every means in its power. It is related by the *Morning Post* correspondent that the Versailles authorities sent to the English Ambulance in the Rue d'Aguesseau, requesting the directors to give up for capital punishment such of the wounded as had been serving under the Commune and were sufficiently recovered to be executed.

Colonel Rossel, speaking of these dreadful times, averred that people were shot in masses on doubtful charges, and that some of the officers felt compelled to warn their men that accusations often served to revenge personal grudges, on which account it was desirable to be circumspect in making arrests. After a time, the troops themselves became disgusted with these summary executions. On one occasion, a soldier said to his comrade, while two prisoners were being questioned, "Let us go; they are about to shoot them—I



SHOOTING A PÉTROLEUSE.

don't want to see it." But horrible scenes continued to occur, and even some of the generals indulged in jibes at the expense of the wretched captives awaiting death. The Marquis de Galifet has always been spoken of as the most pitiless and inhuman of the superior officers. An occasional correspondent of the *Daily News*, who was for a time arrested as an insurgent, had an opportunity of seeing the way in which this officer proceeded. "Walking down slowly, and eyeing the ranks as if at an inspection," says the correspondent, "the general stopped here and there, tapping a man on the shoulder, or beckoning him out of the rear ranks. In most cases, without further parley, the individual thus selected was marched out into the centre of the road, where a small supplementary column was thus soon formed. The selected evidently knew too well that their last hour was come, and it was fearfully interesting to see their different demeanours. One, already wounded, his shirt soaked with blood, sat down in the road and howled with anguish, calling on God and his mother alternately in the most pitiable terms; others wept in silence; two soldiers, presumed deserters, pale but collected, appealed to all the other prisoners as to whether they had ever seen them amongst their ranks; some smiled defiantly, and others staggered out with a filmy glaze on their eyes, and a leaden-coloured countenance, as if death had already seized them. A few paces from where I stood, a mounted officer pointed out to General Galifet a man and a woman for some particular offence. The woman, rushing out of the ranks, threw herself on her knees, and with outstretched arms implored mercy, and protested her innocence in passionate terms. The general waited for a pause, and then, with most impassable face and unmoved demeanour, said, 'Madame, I have visited every theatre in Paris; your acting will have no effect on me.'" Rossel, referring to a certain *café*, where an unnamed general had taken up his quarters, describes a heartrending incident. "Two men and a woman," he writes, "are brought in: a moment later the prisoners issue forth; one of them is pushed up to the market wall; he hides his face, and tries to escape; a shot upsets him; he gets up; they finish him. Then the other meets with the same fate. The woman who accompanied them is in the middle of the square; the soldiers hold her back. 'But it is my brother,' she screams; 'my brother.' When the shots have rung out, they let her go. Later, another woman is brought in, pale and bewildered; she has insulted an officer; they had killed her husband, and she called him an assassin. The officer threatens to do justice himself; but she finds mercy at the general's tribunal, and goes off more dead than alive. Two men have been brought in: the general is under the porch of the house; in passing he condemns them; but as they are removing them, the general's eye catches the horrified and frightened glance of a young girl in the house. He changes his mind, and the two men's lives are saved. The general goes up-stairs and asks to see the girl, to whom he is grateful for the good impulse." Such impulses, it is to be feared, were not common in the sanguinary madness of the hour. Until the fury of revenge was in some degree satiated, the carnival of death went on without delay or stint.

The number of dead bodies created a horribly foul atmosphere, from which the worst results in the way of epidemic disease were feared. The gutters ran blood; blood flowed in a separate stream along the waters of the Seine; blood was thick upon the pavements and the roadways; and the walls of houses were smeared with the same awful witness. This alone caused a dreadful corruption of the air; and the clouds of smoke overhanging the dolorous city prevented the still more offensive reek below from passing away. Many of the slaughtered insurgents were at once thrown into deep graves; but others lay about for a considerable time, and the general neglect of sanitary precautions threatened the most serious consequences. Moreover, the burial of persons who had died natural deaths was prevented for several days, owing to the state of the town; and at length the dead bodies were collected in carts, as in seasons of plague, and hastily interred. There was also great danger of infection arising from the multitude of prisoners crowded together, without the least attention to health or decency, in the camp at Satory. These men were penned in a large parallelogram, enclosed by a wall, and by a number of cavalry stables. Some were thrust into the stables, others were massed in the open ground; and a cordon of soldiers surrounded the camp, to render escape impossible. Opposite the entrance, guns were drawn up, with their muzzles pointed at the prisoners. The weather being rainy, the earth was soon converted, by the trampling of horses and of men, into a vast quagmire, intersected by ditches. Many of the prisoners, when visited by the *Times* correspondent, were in a wretched state—ragged and barefooted, with dirty handkerchiefs as the sole covering of their heads. Some had tied wisps of straw about their shoulders, as a slight protection against the rain, and most of them looked sullen and depressed. In the stables, the

atmosphere was noisome to the last degree, and the light was so dim that it was difficult to distinguish anything. "It was wonderful," writes the English visitor to this sad prison-house, "to see such a number of ignoble faces, and with such a vile expression, brought together. Among those in the first stable we entered, it was almost in vain to seek a countenance that would not have condemned its owner in the eyes of the most lenient physiognomist." Numbers of these miserable wretches had arrived drunk, half-mad, or completely stupefied, with alcohol in which tobacco had been steeped, and which had been served out to them by their leaders. It seems clear that this nauseous and diabolical stimulant was copiously resorted to by the Communists, as a means of exciting their courage, and steeling their hearts against pity.

The prisoners at Satory were evidently much depressed in spirit. They would hardly answer any questions put to them, and many lay wearily on their fetid straw, or on the damp, filthy earth, heeding no one, and indifferent to all things. Holes were made in the walls of the enclosure, and cannon, loaded with grape and canister, were stationed at the apertures. One night, a prisoner persisted in looking through an embrasure thus guarded. The sentry three times warned him to withdraw, and then blew his brains out. The slightest sign of insubordination was at once punished with death; and this rigour was doubtless unavoidable. On the 24th of May, about a thousand of the captured insurgents revolted, got rid of their handcuffs, and attempted to set fire to the arsenal. In the confusion, fifty-seven escaped. Extra troops, however, were summoned from Versailles; the soldiers fired into the crowd, and three hundred of the rebels were shot. Several female prisoners were also in the camp; and they were described as looking like caged wild beasts.

The Parisian press, as soon as it was at liberty to reappear, was loud in its denunciations of the vanquished revolutionists, and in its demands for pitiless vengeance. After the close of the struggle, the *Indépendance Française* wrote:—"At last Paris is freed from this gang of bandits, returned convicts, assassins, thieves, and incendiaries, who have infested it for two months, under the pretext of the Commune, Central Committee, Delegation of Public Safety, and Federation. At last the French army has returned within our walls—that valiant and noble army so unworthily abandoned by those who had commanded it for the last eight months. Our invincible and unvanquished soldiers have returned, bringing with them order and security in the folds of that glorious tricolour which has 'gone all round the world with our liberties and our glories.' . . . At the moment when we breathe again, when the air, infected by the impure current of these odious monsters (the Communists), is re-entering our lungs, only one cry can proceed from our lips, and that cry will be uttered by all Frenchmen:—'NO PITY FOR THESE WRETCHES.' One punishment alone can expiate their crime—'DEATH.'" The florid and almost hysterical language of this outburst covered a serious purpose; and similar expressions were to be found in other papers. "We braved the *émeute* when it was victorious," said the *Paris Journal*—one of the papers that had been suppressed; "vanquished, we shall fight against it still. It was without right; it was without pity: we, having right, shall be, like it, without pity." The *Petit Moniteur Universelle* said that the "assassins, thieves, cut-throats, and incendiaries" of the Commune were not Parisians or Frenchmen—they belonged to the whole world; which was true in a measure, though certainly the greater number belonged to France, and Paris was the hot-bed which matured their venom. "France," continued the same paper, "will not merely grieve over these disasters. The victim of her too generous hospitality, she will draw herself up in the full grandeur of her misfortune, and, feeling all her children close around her, will cast off this cosmopolitan scum—these international dregs. This will be justice, and all humanity will be grateful to her." It has been said that Prince Bismarck, actuated by a similar sentiment to this, expressed a grim satisfaction at the temporary success of the Commune, because it would attract all the professed revolutionists of Europe to Paris, where they would be caught in a trap, and exterminated. Now that the worst was over, Frenchmen took it upon themselves to be scornfully virtuous with respect to all other nations; and General Trochu, speaking in the Assembly on the 30th of May, said that "the curse of English luxury and Italian corruption" had ruined France. He does not appear to have asked himself how it was, in that case, that neither England nor Italy was ruined.

The principle that the Communists were enemies of society generally, not merely in France, but in all other countries, was very soon taken up by the Government. On the 26th of May, M. Jules Favre, as Minister for Foreign Affairs, addressed a circular to the representatives of France in foreign countries, in which he said:—"The abominable work of the scoundrels who have now succumbed to the heroic efforts of our army must not be confounded with political acts. It constitutes a series

of crimes provided for and punished by the laws of civilised nations. Murder, robbery, and arson, systematically organised, and prepared with infernal art and cunning, should allow their authors and accomplices no other refuge than that of legal expiation. No nation can cover these men with immunity, and their presence in any country would be a shame and a danger. Should you, therefore, learn that any individual compromised in the crimes of Paris has crossed the frontier of the nation to which you are accredited, you will ask the local authorities to arrest him immediately, and advise me of the fact, in order that I may regularise the situation by a demand for extradition."* Belgium had already anticipated this view of the matter; for, on the previous day, Baron d'Anethan, President of the Ministry, had said in the Chamber of Representatives that the Government was armed with sufficient powers to stop on the frontier such of the Parisian insurgents as might endeavour to seek refuge on Belgian territory. "The Government," he added, "cannot consider as political refugees men who have sullied themselves with crime, and who must meet with the penalties which are their due." The feeling in Belgium generally was strongly against the Communists. M. Victor Hugo, at that time living in Brussels, wrote one of his rhetorical and frothy letters to a Belgian paper, and, while condemning some acts of the Commune, offered his dwelling as an asylum for the refugees. This created so much dissatisfaction that the house was mobbed, and it was found necessary to place a large number of police officers about it. In consequence of these events, M. Hugo was ordered to leave the country, and he started for England.

The Spanish Ministry said, with reference to the same subject of Communist refugees, that Spain would not close the door against any one seeking admission into the country, but that the Government would meet the just demands of France, and rigorously carry out the Treaty of Extradition. Even Republican Switzerland determined to give up such of the fugitives as should be proved to have been guilty of actual crime; and this, of course, was the position assumed by our own country. The Germans in the vicinity of Paris gave the French some assistance in the last days of the Commune. They suffered no fugitives to pass through their lines; and it is even said that they shot, or drove back into Paris, many of the insurgents who tried to escape in their direction. The rebels occupying the fort of Vincennes having applied to the commanding officer of the Bavarians at Champigny to be allowed a free passage, without arms, through the German lines, the Bavarian general transmitted to the French military authorities the names of the insurgent officers, and asked that they might be granted passports to Switzerland, and that the men of the garrison might receive a guarantee that their lives should be spared. The French, however, replied, through General Vinoy, that, according to the text of the Convention, the fort of Vincennes belonged to them, and that they had the right to maintain in it a garrison of two hundred men, even during the German occupation of French territory in the neighbourhood of the fort. The consequence of this representation was that in the direction of Vincennes, as in all others, the insurgents fell into the hands of the French troops.

In giving his evidence before the Committee of Inquiry, Marshal MacMahon affirmed that, in the early part of the struggle for the possession of Paris, the insurgents were intensely excited. "A great number of them," he said, "fought with extraordinary energy. There were some who defended, as long as a spark of life remained in them, their red flags on the barricades. They appeared convinced that they were fighting for a sacred cause, and for the independence of Paris. Their enthusiasm, I believe, was genuine." None of them, it appears, as far as the Marshal was aware, spoke of the Republic. The enthusiasm which they exhibited at the beginning of the contest, and which was maintained for some time, died out towards the end. "A general moral collapse," according to MacMahon, "then set in. The prisoners said they only took up arms because they could not do otherwise; that they served the Commune to get something to eat; or that they wanted simply to prevent disorder." With respect to the executions in cold blood, the Marshal believed that they had been greatly exaggerated; but he admitted that in some quarters his instructions, to the effect that prisoners who surrendered their arms should not be shot without trial, had been disregarded. The fact is, that in the madness of civil convulsion such acts are certain to occur. Soldiers exasperated by a prolonged and savage resistance will take the law into their own hands, and, under particular circumstances, will as little

* It was by a singular Nemesis that M. Favre and his fellow Republicans were compelled, shortly after their accession to power, to resort to those repressive measures which they had unceasingly yelled against the Emperor for adopting. M. Ernest Picard, Minister of the Interior, was obliged, on the 26th of May, to present a Bill re-establishing the Imperial system of requiring deposits to be made by all new journals, which the Opposition in former days had so bitterly denounced. On the Minister being sarcastically asked when he would propose some other re-enactment of a similar kind, he coolly replied, "One thing at a time!"

wait for a court-martial to investigate that of which they have actual knowledge as they would pause in the heat of battle to institute a legal inquiry as to whether they had been fired on by the enemy, and were free to fire to return. No doubt, many atrocities that had no sort of justification were committed; but it is unfair to class all summary executions under this head. The blame rests mainly with those who originated the civil war, and carried it on with arson and deliberate murder.

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CHAPTER XXXVII.

The Hostage Decree—Final Determination to Set it in Force—Removal of the Captives from Mazas to La Roquette—Ferocious Mobs and Debased Faces—La Roquette and the Prison Arrangements there—Shooting of the Archbishop of Paris and Five Others—Attempts to Save the Life of the Archbishop—Last Letter of M. Bonjean—Brutality of the Governor of La Roquette—Noble Self-Devotion—A Dreadful Night—Assassination of Fifteen more Hostages—Cruel Jesting—Project for Setting Fire to La Roquette—Further Assassination of Hostages—Defiance of the Commune by the Remaining Prisoners—Flight of Communal Leaders from La Roquette—Murder of the Abbé Surat and other Priests—The Dying Struggles of the Commune—Arrival of Marines at La Roquette, and Deliverance of the remaining Hostages—Obsequies of the Archbishop of Paris and other Ecclesiastics—The Rev. F. Pérraud on the Moral of the Commune—Letter of Father Hyacinthe—The Church and the Modern Spirit—Demagogueism and Democracy.

IN the last days of its drunken and furious rule—in the very crisis and agony of its violent death—while the grasp of the national army was tightening on its throat, and it could only fetch its breath in spasms, and only move its limbs in the convulsions of dissolution—the Commune added one more to its atrocities by the murder of those whom it had detained as hostages. The captives in question—nearly all of them priests—had for the most part been arrested in consequence of the decree of April 7th, by which it was provided that all persons accused of complicity with the Versailles Government should be at once arraigned and imprisoned; that, on the report of a jury of accusation, the accused who were found guilty should be considered hostages of the people of Paris; and that all executions of prisoners of war, or of partisans of the Commune, by the Versaillese, should be immediately followed by the execution of a triple number of hostages, who were to be drawn by lot. It does not appear that the persons arrested had committed any overt act against the Commune; but, from their callings, position in life, and known antecedents, it was inferred that they must of necessity be opposed to the Red Republic. Some of them, including the Archbishop of Paris, were arrested two days before the date of the decree. They were thrown into the prison of Mazas, and on the 17th of May it was resolved to put the decree in force against them, on the ground of an alleged act of atrocity by the regular troops, the improbability of which has been already demonstrated. The Communists, however, still hesitated to commit so great a crime as the murder of these helpless prisoners; but after the Government had obtained possession of Paris, the savage band headed by Félix Pyat and others resolved to do their worst while yet they had the power. About six o'clock on the evening of May 22nd, Dacosta, the subordinate of Raoul Rigault, went to the gaol where the hostages were, and said to a priest, "Citizen, the Versailles troops are entering Paris; they are burning everywhere, and putting the city to fire and sword. But we will do more than this. You are about to be removed with your fellow-prisoners." On that and the following day, the hostages were removed from Mazas to La Roquette: a fact in itself equivalent to a sentence of immediate execution, since the latter is the prison allotted to those who are condemned to death.

The order for the transfer was signed by Dacosta. What made this change of quarters the more bitter was the circumstance that many of the prisoners knew of the entry of the Line regiments into Paris, and were congratulating themselves on the prospect of a speedy delivery from the hands of their enemies. The Abbé Lamazou, one of the hostages who escaped death, has recorded in his volume, "The Place Vendôme and La Roquette," that, on the cells being opened, on the 23rd, for the removal of himself and his fellow-captives, some of those unfortunate beings thought that the moment of their liberation had arrived. A large van, surrounded by National Guards, was waiting in the court-yard of the prison, and about fifteen prisoners, including M. Lamazou, were thrust into the vehicle. The first convoy of hostages, removed on the previous day,



had been threatened on the road by the populace. Men, women, and children, endeavoured to stop the vehicle, exclaiming, "Down with the *chouans* and priests! We'll tear them to pieces here on the spot!" The Abbé Perny, in his evidence before one of the courts-martial after the suppression of the rebellion, said that he had lived five-and-twenty years among savage tribes, but that he had never seen anything so horrid as the faces, old and young, of the people who crowded about the van. On the 23rd, the party to which the Abbé Lamazou belonged were insulted by the National Guards who had them in charge. "You reckoned on the arrival of the Versailles murderers," they cried, in taunting accents. "Well, this very morning we cut them to pieces with our mitrailleuses. We took 20,000 of them prisoners; and the *chouans*, with their accomplices, shall meet with the fate they deserve."



M. LEON SAY.

The prison of La Roquette is divided into two portions, called the east and west, which are separated, through the greater part of their depth, by a large inner courtyard, but are joined, towards the street, by a third building. Some of the prisoners were confined on the first floor in the western wing, while the second and third floors were occupied by malefactors who had been condemned to death by the Court of Assizes. The remaining hostages were imprisoned (together with some soldiers and others) on the third floor of the eastern wing, the first floor of which was filled by about a hundred disaffected National Guards, and the second by a detachment of policemen who had been captured at Montmartre on the 18th of March. The cells in this prison were very small; the place was dirty, and no regard was paid to sanitary arrangements, or to the commonest requirements of decency.

Neither chair nor table was allowed the prisoners: an iron bedstead was the sole furniture in each cell. The captives, however, were allowed the privilege of meeting each other, at certain hours, in one of the yards, or in the galleries of the wards they occupied. In this way, M. Lamazou had the sad satisfaction, on the morning of May 24th, of seeing the Archbishop of Paris, who was shot that very day. Monseigneur Darboy appeared much altered by privation and long suffering, acting on a constitution not originally strong. He retained his courage and composure, however, throughout the whole of the painful trials he had to endure.

Between seven and eight o'clock on the evening of the 24th, the Archbishop and five other of the hostages were shot in the inner courtyard of the prison, in the presence, it was alleged, of Raoul Rigault, Ranvier, and Ferré. The governor of the prison—a man named François, or Lefrançais, who had formerly been at the hulks—entered that part of the gaol in which the hostages were confined, and, at the head of fifty National Guards, began the work of death. He went up to the first floor of the western wing, exclaiming, "The Royalists are murdering the Republicans: there must be an end to all this!" He then took a list marked with red pencil, and, having caused the cell-doors to be opened, called out, "Citizen Darboy! Citizen Deguerry! Citizen Bonjean! Citizen Ducoudray! Citizen Clerc! Citizen Allard!" The first of these was the Archbishop. M. Bonjean was the President of the Court of Cassation, and the other four were priests. Each of the victims answered in a firm voice, "Present!" On their way down to the basement, they were subjected (according to the narrative of M. Lamazou) to the grossest insults. They were conducted to a dark corner in the winding alley which runs between the prison and the outer rampart; and here, for a brief while, they were permitted to address each other in words of comfort and mutual absolution. It has been stated that the Abbé Deguerry exhibited a want of nerve in this terrible scene; but the Abbé Lamazou denies the assertion, and alleges that the momentary hesitation of M. Deguerry in replying to his name was owing to his being engaged in administering the communion to himself with a consecrated wafer given him by Monseigneur Surat, another of the ecclesiastical prisoners. The firing party having been drawn up, Monseigneur Darboy advanced, and, it is said, addressed a few words of forgiveness and compassion to his executioners. According to an account afterwards written by M. Evrard, a sergeant-major of the National Guards, and a prisoner, who fortunately escaped the fate of the others, two of the firing party knelt before the Archbishop, and implored his pardon. Their comrades thereupon rushed at them with kicks and blows, and insulted the hostages so scandalously, that the commander himself was shocked at it, and exclaimed, "You are here to shoot these men, and not to outrage them." The prisoners were shot one at a time, beginning with Father Allard, and ending with the Abbé Deguerry. The National Guards who effected the massacre are said to have been drunk, and to have fired wildly. Nevertheless, the fatal act was soon accomplished. It was also alleged that the bodies were afterwards bayoneted, as if in wanton love of cruelty. They were then thrown into a goods-wagon of the Lyons Railway Company, taken to Père la Chaise, and hastily flung into a trench, where they were allowed to remain without a handful of earth being thrown over them. Some of their clothes were burnt on the scene of execution; and the firing party went to the cells of the victims, took what money they found there, and dispersed or destroyed the books and papers left behind.

A strange fatality seems to have attached of late years to the office of Archbishop of Paris. Monseigneur Affre was killed at the barricades in the insurrection of June, 1848, when endeavouring to persuade the combatants to lay aside their mutual antagonism; and, early in 1857, Monseigneur Sibour, his successor, was assassinated in the church of St. Etienne du Mont by a fanatical priest named Verger. Monseigneur Darboy did not immediately succeed the latter prelate, having only attained his full dignity in 1863. He was fifty-eight years of age at the time of his death. In his religious views he was moderate and tolerant, opposed to the Ultramontanes, and apparently a favourite with the Emperor, for, besides being Archbishop of Paris, he was made Grand Chaplain to his Majesty, and also a senator. During the imprisonment of this unfortunate prelate, Mr. Washburne, the American Minister, made repeated efforts to obtain his release; and the Protestant Ministers of Paris, with an admirable forgetfulness of sectarian divisions, addressed to the members of the Commune, on the 20th of May, the following letter of intercession:—

"Citizen Members of the Commune,—At this time of terrible seriousness for our city, for France, and for yourselves, consent to listen to the free utterance of men, your fellow-citizens, who have remained at their post in Paris in the midst of such sufferings, to act there as a ministry of peace by consoling the afflicted, taking care of the wounded, and giving aid to the

dying. What urges them to speak is neither a political motive nor party spirit; it is humanity, it is the honour of France, it is the law of the God of the Gospel in whom they believe, and whom they take to witness as to their sincerity. They venture also to say that it is their duty to you; they owe it to you to tell you the truth as they feel it in their hearts. Citizens, we have shuddered at the news that the Commune appears determined to enter upon the road of sanguinary reprisals and political executions. If this be the case, which we hesitate to believe, we unite with those who have already protested against such an intention, and we beg you not to add, to so much blood spilt on the fields of battle, blood which will not be shed in fight. To punish a hostage by death because another man is accused of having committed a murder—to strike, for the crime committed by another, even if the crime be proved, a man who has committed no fault condemned by ordinary laws—would this be an act of justice? We ask of the conscience of every member of the Commune, would it not rather be a return to barbarism? . . . . . Several of our foreign co-religionists, who have remained in Paris during the siege, and who have given to our nation brilliant proofs of their sympathy for our wounded and for our famished population, have desired to sign this address with us. In presenting it to you we obey the voice of our consciences, which would not permit us to remain silent."

Amongst the signatures to this document were those of Pastors Grandpierre, Vallette, Guillaume Monod, Louis Verens, Edmond de Pressensé, and Emile Cook; of John Rose Cormack, M.D., of Paris and Edinburgh; and of Edward Forbes, Anglican Minister.

M. Bonjean had exhibited all through his imprisonment a remarkable serenity and fortitude; and shortly before his death he wrote a letter to his son, which was animated by an admirable spirit. He here said:—

"My dear Child,—What I have done by staying at my post I would do again, however painful may be the consequences for my beloved family. To do one's duty, my dear boy, is in itself a satisfaction, which enables us to bear with patience, and even with a certain degree of suavity, the most bitter griefs. It fulfils those words of the Sermon on the Mount, the sublime philosophy of which I never so well understood before: 'Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake.' It is the same idea that was expressed in another form by Algernon Sidney, when, on coming down the Tower staircase to lay his head on the block, he answered to his friends, who were astonished at his cheerfulness at such an awful moment, 'My friends, we must do our duty, and remain cheerful, even unto the scaffold.'"

In a deposition subsequently taken, M. Puymoyen, the physician of the Little Roquette (a prison for juvenile delinquents situated exactly opposite its larger namesake), declared that on May 24th an agent of the Commune left the Mairie of the Eleventh Arrondissement with an order couched in the following terms:—"Sixty-eight hostages must be shot. This morning, at the barricade of the Rue Caumartin, a captain and six of our men were killed." The recorder of La Roquette observed that there must be some error in the number, as it could not really be intended that sixty-eight prisoners should be killed on account of the death of only seven Communists. The agent accordingly went back, and, after a time, again presented himself with an order to shoot six priests. The recorder still thought there must be a blunder, as M. Bonjean, whose name was mentioned, was not a priest. This second suggestion, however, had no effect, and on the following day the governor of the prison threatened the recorder with his pistol, bade him leave, and said, "You are a suspicious character, and I'll blow your brains out if you come back. Thanks to you, we had but six yesterday, instead of sixty-eight." It was not long, however, before the desired number was more than made up. In all, seventy hostages appear to have been sacrificed to the vengeance of the expiring Commune.

A very noble piece of devotion on the part of one of the imprisoned ecclesiastics was related in a letter to the *Journal des Débats*, and should not be omitted in this place. The writer said:—

"Father Guérrin, a priest belonging to the foreign missions, dwelt in the cell No. 22, which communicated with No. 21, tenanted by a lay hostage—a man having a wife and children. After lavishing upon him consolations and soothings of the most exquisite character, Father Guérrin observed to his fellow-captive, during the night after the murder of the Archbishop and of the five other victims, that the call-out of the prisoners had been already made, and would probably again be made, without their identity being ascertained. 'So,' added he, 'to substitute one person for another would be an easy matter; and if whole batches were carried off at one time, the last survivors would have some chance of being saved by the liberators, who cannot now be long in arriving.' It so happened, when Father Guérrin was arrested, that he wore a layman's apparel. In prison he had allowed his beard to grow, and no one would have thought him to be a clergyman. So, taking his stand on all those circumstances, 'so fortunately coinciding,' said Father Guérrin, with the most touching simplicity, he proposed to his neighbour to answer in his stead, if, at the first calling out, his name was asked for. 'You are a married man,' continued the good priest; 'you have a wife and family, for whose sake you are bound to live. These are ties too painful to be thus broken

asunder, and your sacrifice is far more poignant than ours. As for myself, a priest and a missionary, I went out to China in quest of martyrdom, but I could not meet it there. Well, my dear sir, I shall find it here, no matter whether it be to-day or to-morrow, especially if I can make it useful to yourself, and contribute to save your life.'

"It would have been downright impossible to propose in a more simple way, as a thing most natural and beyond any contradiction, an act of heroic abnegation. It was only after a long and obstinate debate, after manifold protests, after threats amounting to a steadfast refusal to allow any substitution of the kind, that Father Guérrin's companion obtained from him a promise that he would give up his intended plan."

During the night between the 24th and 25th, the doors of the prison were being continually opened, in order that the National Guards might take away fresh victims, or put new prisoners into the cells. A so-called court-martial was sitting at the Record Office, while another was at work in the Little Roquette, handing over prisoners to armed bands of men and women. An incessant noise of drums and trumpets mingled with the rumbling of carts; and at the same time the miserable captives within the cells could see the dull glare reflected from the flames which were destroying a large part of Paris. At noon on the 25th the prisoners were allowed to take exercise in the courtyard, as on the day before. Towards the close of this period of recreation, if such it can be called, a shell struck the wall under which they were walking, and scattered the fragments all around. When separating, the captives said to one another, "Farewell till next time; here below, or high above!" On the morning of the 26th, fifteen prisoners were put to death, among whom was M. Jecker, the famous banker, whose claims were intimately connected with the disastrous Mexican war. The others were priests. At eight o'clock in the evening, one of the keepers made a sign to the Abbé Lamazou and the Abbé Amodru (who occupied adjoining cells), signifying that they must go below to be shot. "The end has come!" exclaimed M. Amodru. Both fell on their knees, and, through a window which was between them, gave each other final absolution. Some of the other prisoners looked out of their cells, and the more brutalised scoffed at the prayers which the two ecclesiastics were saying. M. Lamazou put on his clerical vestments, wrote to his parents, friends, and brethren, a few farewell lines, and ended by reading in his breviary the prayer for souls in agony. Half an hour afterwards he learnt that there had been a mistake. He was subsequently informed by some of the lay prisoners that it was a favourite trick of the Communal agents to tell the captives that they were just about to be shot, and then, a few minutes later, to add that the ceremony was put off till the next day, and that they would lose nothing by waiting. "I was likewise assured," writes M. Lamazou, "that, according to orders issued by the Commune, Thursday, the 25th, had been fixed upon for a general massacre of the hostages; a measure postponed, however, from day to day, for the sole reason that not a single squad of insurgents was to be found ready to go through this horrid work, and because the convicts, and other prisoners of that caste, had likewise positively refused to do such wholesale butchery. Some other miscreants proposed to set fire to our prison, or to blow it up with fulminating ingredients." The natural bias of M. Lamazou against the Commune and its agents must be duly considered in our reception of all such statements, which are nearly incredible in their gigantic wickedness. Yet it must not be forgotten that they are confirmed by positive testimony. François, the governor of La Roquette under the Commune, deposed, in his evidence given before one of the courts-martial:—"The keepers told me that a plan was laid for setting fire to La Roquette. I gave orders that nothing of the kind should take place. I was then told that the Commune had ordered the measure. The keepers even added, 'Come along, come along, M. François; they are going to fire the building.'" M. Puymoyen, the physician of the Little Roquette, also stated:—"On Saturday, May 27th, the Director of the Prison for Young Delinquents called me. 'You see,' said he, 'that we have no time to lose. It is all over with the Commune; they are going to burn both the Greater and the Lesser Roquettes.'" The design was fortunately not carried out; but that it was really entertained seems only too probable.

The other hostages were executed on the 27th of May.* At five o'clock, A.M., an emissary of the Commune went up to the first floor of the western wing, and cried out to the prisoners, "Citizens, pay due attention to the call. We must have fifteen of you." Among the persons shot on this occasion were three Jesuit fathers; the four principal fathers of the Picpus Congregation; the Abbé Sabatier, belonging to the church of Notre Dame de Lorette; the Abbé Planchat, a home missionary; and the Abbé Seigneret. After these had been called forth, fifty-four gendarmes, police officers, and Paris guards were successively brought out, and deluded by a most atrocious promise of

* It is not clear, from the narrative of the Abbé Lamazou, whether this massacre was on the 26th or 27th; but it seems most probable that it was on the latter day.

freedom, followed by massacre. "The people are generous," said the Communist officer in command. "You are free; but you must first go to the Mairie of the Eleventh Arrondissement, where you will get a safe-conduct." They believed these assurances; but as soon as they had joined the ecclesiastics in the courtyard, the whole party were handed over to a company of National Guards, by whom they were conducted towards Belleville, and made to enter a yard in the Rue Haxo. Here they were shot in the midst of a large crowd of yelling savages, and their bodies were afterwards trampled on, beaten with the butt-ends of muskets, and thrown ignominiously into a dung-pit. The execrable treachery of shooting men after telling them that they were free, had been committed by the Communists once before. About twenty Dominican priests had been imprisoned in Fort Bicêtre. When, on the 25th of May, it was found necessary to abandon this work, the Dominicans were removed to the Gobelins Factory, with a promise of being set at liberty. They were immediately afterwards, however, forced to work on the barricades, and then sent to prison. In the course of the afternoon they were visited by a company of National Guards, who deliberately proceeded to load in their presence. The outer door of the prison was then thrown open, and the commanding officer said, "You are free. Go out one by one." They did as directed, and were shot down as they issued forth. Only one or two escaped.

The members of the Commune took up their quarters at La Roquette on Saturday, the 27th, and they seemed to become actually mad with excitement as the troops of Versailles drew nearer and nearer. Ferré, in particular, according to M. Lamazou, "rushed and sprang about like a panther afraid of losing its prey." With a revolver in one hand, and a rifle slung over his shoulder, he roamed about, shouting, "Come, quick, quick! Shoot these rascals! To the shambles, to the shambles! Citizens of the Faubourgs, come and avenge your sons and fathers, who are at this very moment massacred!" Ferré had the reputation of being the most ferocious member of the Commune. He ordered all the convicts detained in the prison, pending their removal to the hulks, to be brought before him. He then told them they were free, supplied them with arms and uniforms, and incited them to the murder of the remaining hostages. A gendarme and a soldier of the Line were killed during the day, and the lives of all were threatened.

At a little past three in the afternoon, the bolts of the cell in which M. Lamazou was confined were hastily drawn, and the Abbé, on issuing forth into the corridor, found himself in the midst of a crowd of priests, soldiers, and National Guards. Most of them were under the impression that they were about to die; but in truth succour was at hand. One of the keepers, named Pinet, who had long been indignant at the atrocities committed by the Communists, was now resolved to do what he could to save them from the fate with which they were threatened. He had been ordered by one of the National Guards to open the cells slowly, and hand over the hostages, two by two, for execution. Instead of doing this, he shut the door of the third story behind him, and, gathering the prisoners together, almost struck them dumb with surprise by exclaiming, as they were discussing the probability of their immediate death, "Friends, listen to an honest man. These ignoble scoundrels have already killed too many people. Don't allow yourselves to be murdered. Follow me. Let us resist, and fight for our lives. Rather than give you up to them, I will myself die with you." There was a momentary hesitation in accepting this advice, for it was feared by some that any attempt at resistance must necessarily fail, and that then they would be not only killed, but tortured. Pinet, however, encouraged the waverers by saying that the policemen in the cells below were also disposed to defend themselves, and that they were already erecting barricades. "For God's sake," he added, "don't allow yourselves to be shot by such a heap of rascality." It was therefore resolved to dare the worst, in the hope of a favourable issue.

The prisoners now armed themselves with boards and iron rods, which they wrenched from their beds. In a few minutes a large hole had been made in the floor, thus establishing a communication between the captives above and those below. Through this gap one of the police officers managed to climb into the upper storey, and, together with Pinet, assumed command of what M. Lamazou calls "the insurrection." The inner court of the prison was filled with a number of convicts, assembled to witness the execution of the remaining hostages. Some of these threatened the prisoners with rifles; but they placed their mattresses against the windows, and blocked up the entrance to the cells with barricades made out of bedsteads, bedding, and the bricks that had been dug out of the floor. It was not long before the National Guards appointed to shoot the prisoners appeared outside the cells, and, seeing how matters stood, threatened to burn the building, or blow it up, or turn against it the battery of Père la Chaise, if the malcontents did not surrender.

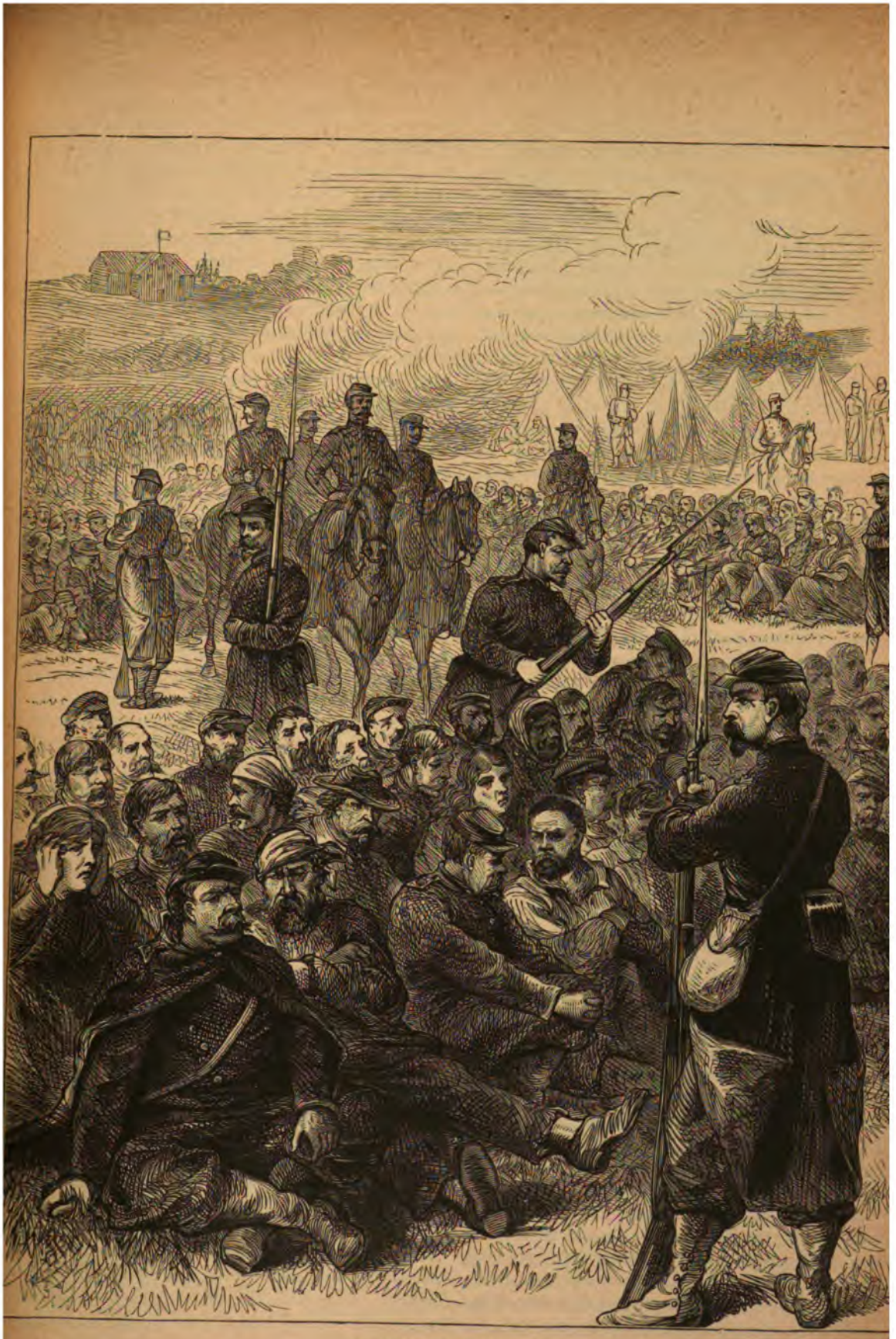
Finding these menaces of no avail, they shouted, "Long live the Line! Surrender, and you shall be set at liberty." The captives, however, distrusting this promise (as well they might), continued their resistance. The barricades were set on fire by the National Guards, but the prisoners contrived to put out the flames. Two pieces of ordnance and a mortar were then planted against the prison, with a view to bombarding it; but the delivering army was now making such rapid progress along the Boulevard Prince Eugène and the Barrière du Trône that the members of the Commune, struck with a panic, took flight, and were speedily followed by the National Guards, most of the Communal officials of the gaol, and the convicts.

Seeing the whole place in confusion, and the gates open, the lay hostages in the wing opposite to that in which M. Lamazou was confined made their escape. Some of the ecclesiastics were encouraged by this example to do likewise; but the purlieus of the prison were still in possession of the insurgents, and the priests were at once set upon and murdered. One of these was the Abbé Surat; he was attacked by a girl of sixteen, who, pushing aside the National Guards, exclaimed, "I'll have the credit of striking the first blow at him!" The poor Abbé, ejaculating, "Oh pity, pity!" put up his hands to ward off the dagger which the virago brandished; the next moment, she had shot him dead with a revolver. A few priests succeeded in hiding themselves in the Faubourg St. Antoine, and the rest returned to the prison, as being now the safest place. Several other ecclesiastics, incarcerated at the prison of La Santé, and at the Conciergerie, were also threatened with death; but the order was not carried out.

On the evening of the 27th it was still very dangerous for the hostages to leave La Roquette, by reason of the large force of Communists yet remaining in the neighbourhood of the prison. M. Rabut, a police officer, ventured to quit the gaol, but was followed by some insurgents, who wanted to shoot him. He escaped from their clutches, and shortly afterwards found himself between two barricades, where his life was again in jeopardy, until he luckily thought of saying that he had been a convict at La Roquette, but had been liberated by the Commune. He was then permitted to pass, and, having cleared some barricades, fell in with the Versailles troops, from whom he received a safe-conduct, by which he was enabled to reach his home.

In the meanwhile, the prisoners who still remained at La Roquette were apprehensive—and, as it proved, not without reason—of a return of the Communists. M. Lamazou therefore directed such of the prison officials as remained at their posts to close the outer gates, and open them to none but the Government forces, who could not fail to arrive in a few hours. These officials were well-affected towards the Government, and therefore obeyed the Abbé's instructions, though doubting their prudence. Towards six o'clock in the evening, a battalion of insurgents arrived outside the prison, but were unable to obtain admission. They stayed for a long while, uttering threats; and the night wore away in doubt and anxiety. In the early hours of the following morning (Sunday, May 28th), a large barricade was erected just opposite the prison in the Rue de la Roquette, and some fighting took place in view of the agitated watchers within the walls of the gaol. The insurgents, however, were shelled from the neighbouring heights, and driven from their position; and at five o'clock in the morning a battalion of Marines surrounded the prison and delivered the captives. Some of the latter were so bewildered by want of sleep and prolonged anxiety that they could not believe in the reality of their succour. They expressed a fear lest the seeming Marines should in truth be a body of Communists in disguise; and they refused to open the gates until the new-comers had given up their arms and standards, and even the very papers of the battalion. At length the prisoners were persuaded of their actual safety, and a scene of mutual congratulation ensued. Shortly afterwards, a number of rebels (including a certain Captain Verig, who had commanded the post of insurgents at the prison, and who had boasted of having "finished" the Archbishop of Paris) were brought in by the soldiers, and shot against the inner wall of the establishment. It is said that when the troops saw the bodies of Monseigneur Darboy and other hostages, lying in the trench at Père la Chaise, they were moved to such fury, that for a time they could not be restrained from killing every one of the Communists who fell into their hands.

The obsequies of the Archbishop of Paris, and of some of the other clerical victims of the insurgents, took place on the 7th of June. The procession passed from the Archiepiscopal Palace along the quays on the southern bank of the Seine, until it reached the Cathedral of Notre Dame. Of the crowds who lined the way, a correspondent of the *Times* observed:—"Among the sad-looking women in black, the careless spectators who had no other motive in being present than idle curiosity, and the respectable and devout, who were doubtless prompted to be there by sympathy and religious



PRISONERS AT BELLEVILLE.

sentiment, were many hard, sullen-looking men, standing for the most part gloomily watching the proceedings, and doubtless congratulating themselves on the value which these evidenced of the estimation in which the murdered hostages were held. To the Republican and Democratic mob of Paris the proceedings were eminently distasteful; and, in fact, the general aspect of the crowd was by no means mournful or sympathetic. Nor was there any clang of martial music or imposing military display to relieve the tame and uninteresting effect of the procession. A solemn silence on the part of those who assisted at it, and an apathetic indifference in those who witnessed it, were the most striking features." The Abbé Lamazou, on the other hand, alleges that Paris had never before shown so much pious emotion and grief as at the funeral of these murdered ecclesiastics. Two squadrons of Cuirassiers headed the procession, and were followed by General Cissy and his Staff, by four mourning coaches, and by a group of acolytes bearing cross, crozier, mitre, and other insignia of office. The hearse of the Archbishop was a ponderous vehicle, covered with massive silver ornaments, and drawn by six horses with plumes and housings of black and silver. Groups of angels in silver supported the roof and the escutcheon, and the latter was wreathed with *immortelles*. The *Times* reporter again avers that no demonstration of reverence or affection was made by the people as the hearse passed on its way. Soldiers in single file, with their arms reversed, marched on each side; and the hearse was followed by a number of priests and members of the Assembly, by several nuns and a few ladies on foot, by three more mourning coaches, and by regiments of the Line, Artillery, and Cuirassiers.

The scene within the cathedral was far more impressive than that in the streets. The building was draped in black and silver, the gloom of which was relieved by the light of numberless tapers, which flickered from massive silver candelabra, ranged on both sides of the nave, and alternating with braziers from which rose bright green flames. "Every massive column," continued the writer in the *Times*, "was hung with black, bordered with ermine, and above them were embroidered escutcheons, each bearing the name of a victim of the massacre by the Commune. In the centre were five catafalques, surrounded by candles, and hung with the robes of office of those whose tombs they represented. High above the rest rose that of the Archbishop, covered with a white satin pall, the mitre, pallium, rochet, and stole upon the coffin. At each of the four corners stood an angel; the lofty canopy being supported by draped columns, ornamented with silver, and surmounted by plumes. On each of the four sides of this catafalque burnt a green light. In the transepts on either side were the relations of the deceased, the members from Versailles, and other official personages. The aisles were lined with soldiers, who guarded the entrance to the sanctuary as well as all the external avenues leading to the cathedral, which the populace were prevented from approaching. As the swelling strains of the *Dies Iræ*, magnificently rendered, pealed through the lofty aisles, the effect was inexpressibly grand. In a moment of hushed silence, the elevation of the Host was the signal for a peal of bugles, and the whole congregation prostrated themselves. As the solemn High Mass for the Dead concluded, the military bands in the cathedral burst into a peal of symphony, and a salute of cannon, at intervals of a minute, mingled its roar with the clang of the brass instruments. Just at this moment, a woman, apparently overpowered by the effect, rushed between the catafalque of the Archbishop and the one adjoining, and was carried out with some difficulty in an hysterical condition." The procession left the sanctuary as soon as the music had ceased. In the nave, the Papal Nuncio, Monseigneur Chigi, pronounced the absolution, and the service terminated. The body of the Archbishop remained exposed in the cathedral until three o'clock in the afternoon, when it was transferred to the vaults of the Archbishops of Paris.

The terrible outbreak of revolutionary fury, of which the clergy had been specially made the victims, led to many comments on that absence of religious faith among a large proportion of Parisians to which such outrages were to be attributed. The Rev. F. Pérraud, a priest of the Oratory, discoursed on this subject in a funeral sermon on Monseigneur Darboy, preached at Notre Dame on the 18th of July, before the Papal Nuncio and several French Bishops. "We must take up our decision," he remarked, "between Jesus Christ and the Revolution; between the Gospel, that sole foundation of social justice, and the lying systems which bring forth nothing but ruin and desolation. It is time for us to make our choice between those who die and those who kill; between those who kill in the name of liberty, of universal fraternity, of civilisation, of progress, and those who die as victims, like Christ, and, like unto Christ, die loving, blessing, forgiving, unto their last gasp. Those scenes, so justly called 'an awful mystery of iniquity,' are simply the logic of evil pushed to its extreme consequences. Here we have them before us in their

horrid nakedness, those perverse doctrines which we did not fear as long as they were shrouded in a sober guise, as long as they were a measured and polite attack against God, against his Christ, against the Church, against the fundamental principles of morals and duty. This evil spirit hath shown himself in his whole hideous ugliness. God grant it may be for his eternal shame and his last condemnation!" The views of this speaker, however natural to him, and whatever the measure of truth which they embody, could not be received in this country, nor indeed by the intellectual classes of any country, without considerable qualifications. It was impossible not to perceive that they masked an attack against all inquiry, all freedom of judgment, all progress from mediævalism to the broader light and wider knowledge of the modern age; that, in short, their object was to create a sacerdotal despotism such as can never again be established over the consciences of men. Yet, with what was said as to the evil of a total denial of the religious and moral principles, the majority of Englishmen most assuredly agreed.

In a much larger, deeper, and higher spirit, the celebrated Father Hyacinthe, the reforming monk, wrote from Rome to the *Gaulois* newspaper, on the 29th of May:—

"In vain do the men of March 18th pretend to represent two political ideas which would be just if confined within their true limits—the idea of that Commune to which M. de Bismarck did homage in the Reichstag on May 2nd, and the idea of the moral and material regeneration of the working classes. They have compromised these causes by most unacceptable exaggeration, and by the odious means they have made use of. They would have realised the triumph of their cause at the expense of the national unity, and on the ruins of social and religious order. They were a party of assassins, incendiaries, and atheists, but so great a party, that they were, or at least appeared to be, a people. And what is a people without God? Sages have endeavoured to describe them, but the facts we have just seen reveal what such a people is with a reality which defies words. The demonstration of what social atheism is, has been complete. . . . .

"The question of the working classes pre-eminently occupies the attention of the statesman and the man of science, and our society will never know peace till it is solved. The Second Empire thought much of this question, but it dealt with it too much according to the traditions of the Roman Cæsars—*panem et circenses!* The Second Empire looked only to material ameliorations, and even in that point of view it did not take the best means; as, for example, when it forced public works in the great cities, especially in Paris, stripped the fields of hands, and congregated populations which lived apart from the normal conditions of family, of religious influence, and consequently of morality. What should have been done was to think of that popular instruction which is universal among our neighbours beyond the Rhine, and which, at least as much as her military organisation, is a source of strength to Germany. . . . . And the Church herself has not done what she ought to have done for the practical solution of this terrible problem. The Temporal Power and the Pope's Infallibility distracted the thoughts and efforts of those who preside over the destinies of the Church at a moment unparalleled in its history. Instead of the promises and teachings of the Gospel to the disinherited of this world, the Church, in the noisy echoes of the press, and sometimes even by the mouth of its Bishops, treated matters of bitter controversy about the Pope-King, the dogmatisation of intolerance, and the canonisation of the Inquisition. . . . . Behold the work of a people which no longer knows God! and behold the work of those who render it impossible for it to believe in that God, and above all to love him!"

The subjects raised by these two clerical teachers are too important to be satisfactorily discussed in an incidental manner; yet they cannot be entirely excluded from consideration by any who would try to draw its proper moral from the convulsion of 1871. That convulsion revealed what many had obscurely suspected before—the existence, below the surface, of a vast, dark conspiracy against society, against the family life, against property, against religion, against morals, against civilisation, against humanity, against every principle and every institution which the majority of men (excepting among savage races) have been accustomed to venerate through innumerable years. This conspiracy had broken out for a brief season in June, 1848, and lurid symptoms of its existence had glared momentarily on the horizon from time to time during the reign of Napoleon III. Partisan writers, both here and abroad—men who were ready to risk any consequences provided they could give expression to their personal antagonism—were never tired of jeering at the Emperor for endeavouring, as they said, to frighten people into supporting his rule by referring to the Red Spectre which would rise in the very midst of Paris if his repressive system were relaxed. The world was assured again and again that the Red Spectre was purely a "Napoleonic idea," or rather a Napoleonic fraud, concocted for the purpose of creating a sham alarm and a sham necessity. There was no such phantom outside the brains of Imperial writers and the fears of nervous fools. It was a mere bugbear, like the black man in the cupboard with which nurses seek to quell refractory children. Secret plotters in France, who knew or desired the contrary, told us

this from day to day; passionate journalists in England, who might have known better had they preferred the truth to the indulgence of their spleen, echoed the same assertions and arguments, and did their best to lull peoples and Ministries into a false and dangerous security. By-and-by the crisis came, and it was made but too obvious to all the world that the Red Spectre was the most terrible reality of modern times. By an admirable piece of retribution, the very men who, for their own selfish ends, had persistently denied the existence of any such monster, were obliged to encounter him when he came. September 4th was the Frankenstein which called into life the hideous chimæra of March 18th; and it was the men of September 4th who, by a most just dispensation, had to slay the devil they had raised.

The Commune was the ugly birth of an organised class selfishness which had long been struggling to make itself supreme over the nation. It was the insurrection of the so-called working man (as if there were no other) against a social system which did not acknowledge his claim to be a despot. It was also a blind, or rather a drunken, protest against some unquestionable evils in the political and social system of France. Excessive centralisation, extravagance of expenditure, and profligacy of national life, had something to do with its advent. Imperfect education—a vicious literature, which pampered the raging vanity of the mob, flouted authority, made a mock of reverence, and found nothing in life but material for an icy epigram or a hectic sentimentality—revolutions which only brought forth anarchy, and despotisms which were made the convenient excuse for further revolutions—these were amongst the other causes of that portentous fact. The savage animosity of the Red Republicans against the priests was certainly a very remarkable feature of the movement of 1871. But when M. Pérraud essays to deduce this hatred from certain tendencies of the modern intellect on speculative subjects, he travels a great deal too fast, and, it is to be suspected, is arguing more in defence of his own interests than on behalf of truth. The Communists denied the very elements of religious belief, not because a long course of inquiry had resulted in scepticism, but because they saw that the Church was intimately bound up with the system they desired to destroy, and could not possibly be made to coalesce with the new order they wanted to establish. It was a part of the social revolt in which they were engaged; not an affair of abstract and theoretical dissent. How far the Church was responsible for this impression that religion must necessarily be the instrument of tyranny and injustice, let the Church itself inquire. It has a greater motive for such an inquiry than any other institution can possibly have; for on a right solution of the question its very existence in the future must depend. Instead of quarrelling with the modern intellect, let the leaders of that Church examine their own history, their own practice, and their own creed, to discover what it is which occasions this remorseless fury of the revolutionists against the priesthood. To say that it is simply the natural hatred which evil bears to holiness, is but to flatter the egotism which will believe anything rather than that itself can err. The Communists had too much reason for saying that Rome was the sworn ally of tyrants all the world over, and that there was an innate affinity between the priest and the oppressor. In ancient times, the Church would often act as the protector of the poor and friendless against the rich and powerful, however willing to set up a despotism of its own; but for several centuries it has learned to be more courtly. Whenever in these days there is a liberal movement to be murdered, there is a priest to consecrate the act.

The virtues of many of the Roman Catholic clergy are eminent and shining, and none but a fanatic would deny the piety, simplicity, fortitude, and affection which are often to be found in their ranks. But it is unfortunate that the Church, as an institution, has been repeatedly associated with every form of repression—with worldliness the most hard and cynical, with profligacy the most gross, with political cruelty the most extreme. It is equally lamentable that, by the self-imposed law of its existence, it should shut itself out from all progressive development, from the ameliorations of knowledge and the gathering light of ages. The Church will hold no terms with the modern spirit;—the modern spirit replies by holding no terms with the Church. Both suffer by the alienation; but the Church in the larger degree. "Well knows he, who uses to consider," says Milton in a noble passage of the "Areopagitica," "that our faith and knowledge thrive by exercise, as well as our limbs and complexion. Truth is compared in Scripture to a streaming fountain: if her waters flow not in a perpetual progression, they sicken into a muddy pool of conformity and tradition." Incalculable mischief has been done to all forms of religion by the indisposition of all priesthoods to recognise the fact that religion must grow with the growing knowledge of mankind,—must correct its faulty ideals by the higher standards of a more liberal age,—or must sink into an affair of mechanical repetitions and outworn dogmas, which manly thinkers will forsake with disdain, and the

impatient or the wretched will rise against in wrath.

Nothing could be more atrocious, more wicked, or more horrible, than the murder of the priests at La Roquette; but it is as well, while expressing our indignation at so detestable a fact, to consider what had been the first causes of that feeling of implacable hatred which such facts express. Father Hyacinthe, in his admirable letter from the very head-quarters of the Church, showed how the priesthood had lost all hold on the people by their vain wrangling over dogmas which even those who asserted them did not profess to understand. The fact is deeply to be regretted; because the opposition to the priesthood has in Paris been envenomed to such an extent, that amongst large classes of the people it has destroyed the very principle of reverence, and the most elementary aspirations of the soul towards a higher Being and a more perfect life. "Behold the work of a people which no longer knows God!" exclaims Father Hyacinthe; and certainly the spectacle is appalling. The absence—nay, rather the ostentatious denial—of a Divine ideal of goodness and duty, is the death of humanity and morals. Utter selfishness, hard, brazen, and unblushing, takes the place of all the charities and graces of life where there is no "devotion to something afar from the sphere of our sorrow"—where there is not even a desire to raise the mind to the conception of Deity. The Commune of 1871 has shown us what are the material results of the atheism it vaunted.

It has also shown what are the real characteristics of Demagogueism. The Government of France, whatever it may be called, will again and again be compelled to fight that menacing danger; and it can only do so with the weapon of Democracy. The Empire could always appeal to the People against the Mob. The Republic has shown a disposition to distrust the former, and, if it does not take care, will have no resource against the latter. The form of government matters but little, provided it be really supported by the mass of the French nation. Men no longer believe in the divine right of kings, and are not likely to put any greater faith in the modern version of that old doctrine, which declares that Republics are "above universal suffrage." In a frequently renewed consultation of the national pleasure, by an orderly and legal reference to the ballot-boxes, lies the sole hope of France; and year by year, since 1871, this principle has been more clearly recognised.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Shooting of Communal Ringleaders—Execution of Millière—Lists of Communists Shot and Captured—Foreign Members and Supporters of the Commune—Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism—M. John Lemoinne on the Denial of Country—The Influence of the International—Demonstrations in London in Favour of the Commune—Mr. Whalley and the Extradition of Fugitives—Mazzini on the Commune—Prince Napoleon's Indictment of M. Jules Favre—The Paris Fires and the London Fire Brigade—Horrible Condition of Paris—Military Law as Administered by Marshal MacMahon—Paris under Restraint—Resignations of Picard and Jules Favre—Losses in the Taking of the City—Narrow Escape of Notre Dame—Additional Proofs of the Complicity of the Commune in the Firing of Paris—Ineffectual Apologies—Opening of the Courts Martial for the Trial of the Prisoners—Sentences on the Chief Offenders—Executions at Satory—The Republic Baptised in Blood.

Now that the insurrection was fully quelled, the Government of M. Thiers turned its attention to the terrible task of punishing the authors of so much mischief. Several of the insurgents had been killed in battle, or had been summarily executed in the streets of Paris; but a vast number of prisoners were in the hands of the authorities, and it was necessary to make judicial inquiry into their cases. A good many of these were speedily set at liberty, owing to a want of sufficient evidence, or to its being made apparent that there had been a mistake in the arrest; but the greater number were retained for trial before the Courts-Martial. Of the ringleaders of the rebellion, those who were shot during the struggle, either by chance or intentionally, were Delescluze, Dombrowski, Raoul Rigault, Cluseret, Millière, Billioray, Lefrançais, Amouroux, Brunet, Duval, Gaillard (Inspector of Barricades), Martin, Vidal, C. Meslin, N. Piquet, Cournet, Vermorel, Rozoua, Seraillier, Pothier, Bosquet, Parisel, Vallès, Vaillant, Tavernier, and Bisson. Some of these men, when captured, made a desperate resistance, and were despatched by the soldiery. Others were shot in cold blood when no such resistance was offered. Marshal MacMahon had given orders that when men surrendered their arms they were not to be shot; but this rule of war was unhappily forgotten or disregarded during



PASCHAL GROUSSET IN CUSTODY.

the fury of the struggle. Major Garcia, in his evidence before the Committee of Inquiry into the causes of the insurrection, gave a minute account of the shooting of Millière, which he himself ordered. The insurgent was brought before a number of officers of the regular army while they were breakfasting at a restaurant in the Rue Tournon. He was surrounded by an infuriated crowd, who threatened to tear him to pieces. To Major Garcia's question, "You are Millière?" he answered, "Yes; but you are aware that I am a deputy." "Possibly," replied the major; "and it also happens that there is a deputy here to identify you. M. de Quinsonas cannot fail to recognise you." He added that his orders were to shoot him. "Why?" asked Millière. Major Garcia replied (and the speech would be almost beyond belief, if we had it not upon his own testimony), "I don't know you personally, but I have read your articles with indignant loathing. You are a viper, on whose head one likes to tread. You detest society." Here Millière broke in, saying, "I detest *this* society." "Very good," retorted Garcia; "society in return will cast you from her bosom.



MONSEIGNEUR GUIBERT, ARCHBISHOP OF PARIS.

I am going to have you shot." "Your summary justice," said Millière, "is barbarous and cruel." The major rejoined, "And all *your* cruelties—have you thought of them? At all events, you say you're Millière, and that's enough for us." Orders were then given that the prisoner should be taken to the steps of the Pantheon, and executed. Continuing his evidence, Major Garcia said:—"He was commanded to go on his knees, and demand pardon of society for the evil he had done; but he refused to

be shot kneeling. I then said to him, 'It's the order; you mustn't be shot in any other posture. He attempted to go through the farce of opening his shirt and presenting his bare breast to the firing party; on which I called out, 'You want to show off. I suppose you wish it to be said in what way you met death. Die tranquilly, and it will be better for you.' 'I have a right, in my own interest, and in the interest of my cause, to die as I have a mind.' 'With all my heart; but kneel. I command you.' 'Not unless I am forced by two men.' Two men were told off to put him on his knees. The firing party was drawn out; Millière exclaimed, 'Long live humanity!' He was going to cry something else, when he got his *quietus*." Anything more undignified than the altercation reported by Major Garcia, or more indecent than the execution, it would be difficult to conceive.

The deaths of Vallès and Longuet were hardly less horrible. Both were taken at a barricade, and Vallès was shot first. The body was then pierced with bayonets until it was almost beyond recognition. The Versailles commander asked Longuet if he would give such information as would lead to the apprehension of his colleagues. He replied by tearing open his vest, and exclaiming, "Fire!" This was done, and Longuet speedily fell dead.

The Communists who were by this time in the hands of the Government authorities were—Rochefort, Mourot, Assi, Johannard, Ranvier, Blanqui, Clément, Ferré, G. Duchêne, Demay, Okolowicz, Durassier (the so-called "Admiral of the Seine"), Maljournal, Rastoul, Eudes, La Cécilia, Lescure, Vermesch (editor of *Le Père Duchesne*), and Paschal Grousset. Others, including Rossel, were captured from time to time. Nothing, in connection with this unprecedented rising, struck Frenchmen more forcibly than the large proportion of foreigners who were mixed up with the movement. It was evident that the insurrection was an attempt on the part of universal demagogy to inaugurate in Paris the new social system which was to supplant the old; in the hope that, having established a base of operations on the banks of the Seine, it might with the greater facility spread into other lands. The *Figaro* of May 30th published a list of the foreign members of the Commune, from which it appears that its ranks were recruited from a great number of widely-distinguished nationalities. The list was as follows:—

"Anys-el-Bittar (Egyptian), Biondetti (Italian), Babick (Pole), Becka (Pole), Cluseret (American), Cernatesco (Pole), Crapulinski (Pole), Capellaro (Italian), Carneiro de Cunha (Portuguese), Charalambo (Pole), Dombrowski (Pole), Dombrowski, his brother (Pole), Durnoff (Pole), Echenlaub (German), Ferrera Gola (Portuguese), Frankel (Prussian), Giorock (Wallachian), Grejorok (Wallachian), Kertzfeld (German), Iziquerdo (Pole), Jalowski (Pole), Kobosko (Pole), La Cécilia (Italian), Landowski (Pole), Mizara (Italian), Maratuch (Hungarian), Moro (Italian), Okolowicz (Pole), Ostyn (Belgian), Olinski (Pole), Pisani (Italian), Potampenki (Pole), Ploubinski (Pole), Pazdzierswski (Pole), Piazza (Italian), Pugno (Italian), Romanelli (Italian), Rozyski (Pole), Rubinowicz (Pole), Rubinowicz, P. (Pole), Syneck (German), Skalski (Pole), Soteriade (Spaniard), Thaller (German), Van Ostal (Dutchman), Vetzel (German), Wrobleski (Pole), Witton or Wilton (American or English), Zengerler (German)."

It was at first said that there were many English connected with the Commune; but it appeared that those few who were at all associated with the movement acted simply in the capacity of medical attendants on the ambulances. In the above list it was a mistake to include Cluseret, who, though an American citizen by adoption, was a Frenchman by blood and birth. It will be seen that the Poles and Italians predominated in the foreign supporters of the Commune; but the demagogy of the world was very fairly represented. This cosmopolitan feature of the revolution was one of those characteristics of which its leaders boasted. They cast forth the idea of country with as much contempt as they rejected the conceptions of a Deity, of family life, or of property. "They attempted," writes the Abbé Lamazou, "to do what no revolutionists, no rioters, had even dreamt of—and that was to do away with the very notion of a fatherland." Humanity was to take the place of country; patriotism was to give way to an inclusive regard for the whole race of men. As the child was to be absorbed in the State, so the State was to be absorbed in the world. This is all very well as a piece of rhetoric, and it may indeed point to the larger patriotism of a later day, when men shall know and understand each other better. But to endeavour to force on such a conclusion by violent measures, in the midst of a world divided by an immense variety of languages, habits, and interests, is the mistake of dreamers whose dreams are mischievous. The lower development leads up to the higher; and the love of country is no bad preparation for the love of humanity. It is greatly to be doubted whether the one can exist without the other; for man is unable to realise these vast conceptions all at once, but requires some sweet, familiar gradations of experience to conduct him from the barrenness of mere self-love to the fruitful grandeur of an all-inclusive affection. The attempt

to reach such altitudes at a bound recoils upon itself; and thus we see that the cosmopolitan philosophers of the Commune were guilty of the grossest self-indulgence. He who cares nothing for his family will care nothing for his country; he who cares nothing for his country will value humanity simply as a subject for declamation or a mask for rascality. Love of the family, love of country, and love of the race, are three notes in an ascending scale, which cannot be separated without destroying the harmony.

As if to make their disavowal of country as repulsive as possible, the advocates of this distasteful principle put it forward in the most nakedly revolting manner they could devise. One of them, quoted by the Abbé Lamazou, said:—"What do we care about the fate of Alsace and Lorraine, or the fate of Paris and France? What we aim at is the massacre of the priests and of the wealthy." And another exclaimed, "What do we care about war against the foreigner? What we want is war, deadly war, on capital." In a similar spirit, Vésinier, speaking at a meeting at Charing Cross in June, 1869, said, in foreshadowing the work of the Communal Republic:—

"We must die or conquer. To do that we must deny the existence of a God, of a family, of a fatherland. We must free our children from the brutalising yoke of priests, kings, and nationality. To deny God is to affirm that man stands the sole ruler of his own fate; it is doing away with priests and religion. To deny God is for man to assert his own strength and liberty. To deny the existence of a family is to assert the independence of man from his very cradle; it is to deliver woman from a bondage which she owes to priests and to a rotten civilisation. As for our country, we cast it away from us, because we do not admit that men may kill each other for the sake of any nationality. All labourers, all proletarians, are brethren; society at large, built up as it now is, society is our sworn enemy. Society itself is bad; we must alter it. Working men of all countries, to work, to work! War, war to the knife, to capital, to property, and to every Government which protects them! The right of labour to all, the right of property to all—such is our object. To attain that object we will spare no effort; we will fight, we will die, if required, under the guidance of the red flag, that standard of socialism and of the Commune."*

M. John Lemoinne, one of the best-known and most able of Paris journalists, would not regard these foreign Communists as belonging to any recognised race, but described them as a kind of nomadic savages. "Did you ever see," he asked, "any of those wandering tribes who, starting from the wilds of Asia, advance from encampment to encampment towards the Far West, and end by stranding, as it were, in Wales? They are the Gypsies, the Zingaris—a people without either a country or a name, who sleep in their carts, cook their meals on the highway, and carry their country under the soles of their shoes, when soles they may chance to have. The uncouth beings who have laid their hands on Paris are of the same race; one is disposed to look at them with the curiosity of a naturalist. And it is these savages, whose very first principle is to possess no homestead, no hearth, no place of abode, no God,—whose only house ought to be the rolling hut of our shepherd,—it is they, the wild beasts of the desert, who make a revolution in the name of the Commune, in the name of our city, in the name of civic rights, in the name of local and established interests! What a farce! And yet what a doleful tragedy!"

The influence of the International Society had a good deal to do with this affectation of cosmopolitanism. The connection between the International and the Commune has never been exactly defined; but, as shown in Chapter XXV. of this volume, several members of the former were also members of the latter. M. Vésinier, the secretary and official writer of the Commune, was secretary of the French section of the International Association sitting in London; and he declared, a few years ago, that the Association was to prepare the way for the Paris Commune. Now that the bloody experiment had been extinguished, the General Council came forward with a declaration of sympathy with the insurgents; and the Milan branch addressed the working classes of Europe in the same strain. A good deal of agitation was observable among English artisans, of political and socialist views, when the failure of the Commune was placed beyond a doubt. A meeting of the "Universal Republican League" was held in Stamford Street, London, on the 30th of May, at which the chair was taken by a German, and speeches were delivered by various members, who were all designated "Citizens." The chairman—"Citizen" Dahlman—said that on a former occasion they had passed a resolution to the effect that they should hold a great demonstration to show their grief at the downfall of the Commune, to secure the safety of any Communist exiles who might arrive in England, and "to do all they could to advocate their principles." There appeared, however, to be considerable doubt as to the advisability of holding any such demonstration, seeing that not merely the upper and middle classes, but many even of the working class, were incensed at the final actions of the Com-

* "The Place Vendôme and La Roquette," by the Abbé Lamazou.

munists. Moreover, the Irish labourers in London had been moved to the utmost wrath by the murder of the priests, and it was feared that a demonstration might lead to riots. "Citizen" Mills testified that "all the English working men, with the exception of the absolute socialists," were "dead against the Commune." He thought this a shame, but appeared to have no doubt as to the fact. To "Citizen" J. Johnson it seemed that they should do all they could to save "such great men as Blanqui, Félix Pyat, and others, who might yet escape to this country." He was of opinion that it was better all Paris should be blown up than that the Communists should stand and be butchered in cold blood by the men of Versailles. Further allusion having been made to the opposition likely to be offered by the Irish, "Citizen" Wynn told the meeting that, if the Irish ever attempted another Garibaldi riot, there would be bloodshed by the English Trades Union men; in fact, there would be a general massacre. It was ultimately resolved to hold a demonstration, with a view to preventing the extradition of any Communal refugees, and to protesting against the atrocities of the Versailles Government. A meeting of working men, convened by the International Association, was held on the 31st of May, and it was resolved not to get up a demonstration in Hyde Park for some time. At this meeting the chairman read a letter from Mr. John Stuart Mill, the well-known author, in which the writer said:—"Were there the smallest chance that any demonstration of opinion here could arrest or mitigate the horrors now being perpetrated at Paris, I hardly know anything I would not do to promote such a demonstration. But I have no hope of any such blessed result. It is some comfort that those atrocities are generally regarded in England with some of the abhorrence they deserve." The "atrocities" to which Mr. Mill alluded were of course those committed by the Government. It was to his credit that he should have condemned them; but it would have been much more to his credit if he had also condemned the atrocities of the Communists out of which they arose. On this subject, however, he seems to have been perfectly silent; from which it may be inferred that, in Mr. Mill's opinion, massacre and arson were venial matters when perpetrated by a mob, but acts of excessive repression committed by a Government are deserving of the utmost abhorrence. At the same meeting, a letter from Mr. Frederic Harrison, of Lincoln's Inn, a writer on behalf of the Commune, was read, in which it was set forth that, by the terms of the Extradition Act, it would be "utterly impossible" for any English Ministry to forward M. Jules Favre's demand for the giving up of the fugitives.

Another meeting took place on Clerkenwell Green on the 11th of June, and an angry discussion between the English and Irish members ensued. After a few more such demonstrations, the clamour died out, it being obvious that English opinion generally was against the Parisian Communists. Even moderate politicians, however, were for a time a little apprehensive lest the Government should be too ready to surrender fugitives to the French authorities, in compliance with the demands put forward by M. Jules Favre. Mr. Whalley, the member for Peterborough, expressed himself very strongly on this subject, arguing that, as Napoleon III. had been deposed by the community of Paris, and the Government of September 4th was the creation of the same power, that community had an equal right to set up the political system of March 18th, and consequently their fighting men had a perfect claim to all the rights of belligerents. The argument was very infirm; for it was based on the assumption that one wrong justifies another, and it put out of view the special acts of atrocity of which the Communists had been guilty, and which took them out of the category of mere political offenders, and put them in that of ordinary (or rather of extraordinary) criminals. The right of Paris to dictate to France has never yet been justified. The Government of September 4th was a gross usurpation; but the National Assembly resulting from that revolution, and representing all the constituencies of France, had certainly a greater right to consider itself legitimate than a knot of conspirators sitting at the Hôtel de Ville, and only representing Paris, if they represented that. All that the English Government had to do was to obey the provisions of the Extradition Act, and to give up no fugitives for purely political reasons. Such has long been our policy, and the Administration of Mr. Gladstone made no exception to the rule.

Among the various expressions of opinion in condemnation of the Parisian insurgents, was one from the great Italian leader, Mazzini, who, as the chief apostle of European Republicanism, might have been expected to judge the men of the Commune with some leniency. In an article in the *Roma del Popolo*, however, he said:—"The orgy of fury, of vengeance, and of blood, of which Paris has offered the spectacle to the world, would fill our soul with despair, if we had merely an opinion, and not a faith. A people which wallows about as if drunk, raging against itself, and lacerating its limbs with its teeth, while howling triumphal cries;

which dances an infernal dance before the grave it has dug with its own hands; which kills, tortures, burns, committing crimes without sense, aim, or hope; which vociferates like the fool who sets fire to his own pile before the eyes of the foreign foe against whom it did not know how to fight—such a people puts us in mind of some of the most horrid visions of Dante's Hell. The doings of both parties in France are marked by an Irokese ferocity, by an insane bloodthirstiness, more characteristic of wild beasts than of men. It is the duty of the Italian Republicans to separate themselves openly from both French parties, lest their moral sense should suffer the same degradation as in France." This was one of the latest utterances of Mazzini, who died early in the following year; but it was certainly one of his best.

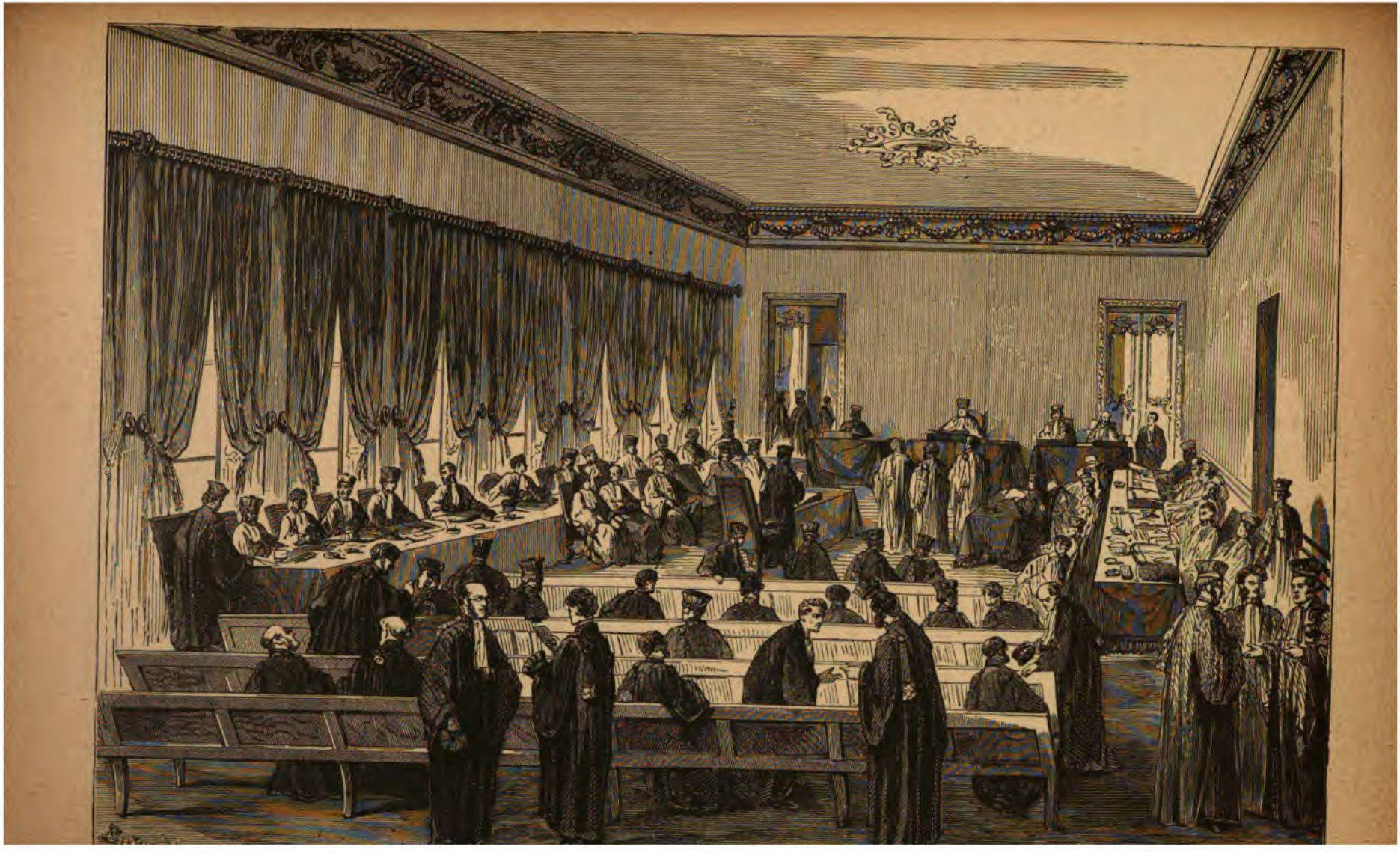
Another remarkable criticism—having reference, however, rather to the Versailles Government than to the Communists—was contained in a letter addressed by Prince Napoleon to M. Jules Favre, and dated "London, 31st May, 1871." This letter was published in the English papers, and it constituted a very trenchant and damaging attack on the results of the September revolution. Prince Napoleon was in some respects one of the most noteworthy members of that remarkable family which, throughout the whole of the present century, has exercised so great an influence on the destinies of France; and after the death in Africa of the Prince Imperial, his son Prince Victor remained the last representative of the Napoleonic line. He combined, in a yet more striking degree than his cousin the Emperor, the apparently dissimilar but not really antagonistic ideas of Cæsarism and Democracy. On many topics his views were those of an extreme Radical; yet he was never oblivious to the claims of his family on the support of France. His speeches in the Senate during the days of the Empire were generally worthy of attention, on account of their boldness, originality, and point; and indeed he was not always on the best terms at court, because of his inconvenient habit of speaking without restraint on some of the most delicate questions of the day. His letter to M. Jules Favre began with the stinging sentences—"Peace is signed with the conqueror. Paris, the grand capital, is in flames; its finest and most venerable structures are reduced to ashes; blood flows in streams: your work is complete!" A strict reckoning, however, the Prince went on to intimate, would be required of M. Favre for the disasters he had caused. "The 4th of September, the armistice discussed at Ferrières, the defence of Paris, the preliminaries of Versailles, the 18th of March, the peace of Frankfort, the burning of Paris—behold your mournful dates! History," said the Prince, "will call you 'the fatal man.'" Favre's sole motive for action, it was further suggested, was hate for the name of Napoleon; and certainly, when one remembers that M. Favre adopted all the repressive parts of the Napoleonic system, and only departed from it in his inability to imitate its successes, and his disinclination to give his own system an equally popular foundation, it is difficult to conceive any other reason for his violent opposition to the Empire than personal antagonism and self-seeking. What, asked Prince Napoleon, was this Government without a name to which M. Favre belonged?—

"Is it the National Defence? No; for you have done nothing but capitulate. Is it a Government of national restoration? No; for France is invaded by anarchy and disorganisation. Is it a Monarchy? No. Is it a Republic? Still less. Is it Liberty? No: where was that at the elections, oppressed by decrees of ostracism, withdrawn at the last moment, after having falsified the choice of the citizens? It is a collection of every evil, held together by the absence of order, of security, of liberty, and of strength. Let us descend the steps by which you have conducted us to the depths of the abyss. On the 4th of September you propose 'the deposition;' the riot guided by you drives away your colleagues; you break your oath; against universal suffrage, you proceed to usurp power at the Hôtel de Ville. The Empire had committed great faults. . . . I neither wish to, nor can I, deny these faults, for which the Napoleons pay far more heavily by their heartfelt grief than by their mere exile; but the Emperor has never sought to cling to the throne by a peace which might save his power by imposing too great sacrifices on France. Mark! we have one consolation—that of having fallen with the country; while, on the contrary, your elevation dates from its misfortunes. You know better than any one the conditions which Napoleon III. could have obtained from Prussia at Sedan. Undoubtedly they were hard, but they were incomparably better than those accepted by you. Our sacrifices would not have borne comparison with those you have subscribed to, without reckoning that we should have avoided the months of disorder brought on by the Government of the Non-Defence of Paris, and by the odious and impotent dictature of those of your colleagues (emigrants in balloons) who pillaged and oppressed our provinces. Up to the fall of the Empire we had submitted to great misfortunes, but these were reparable, as have been those you find recorded in the history of many great peoples. Since the 4th of September, on the contrary, there are no longer such misfortunes, but there are disasters which find no parallel in history. The faults belong to the Empire, the disasters to you; and I ask myself if, amidst the faults of the Empire, its greatest has not been to have tolerated within itself your criminal attempts. The inevitable consequence of your usurpation is the Revo-

lution of March 18th, which you accuse to-day, and the burning of Paris, for which you are responsible. To defend Paris, you limited yourselves to proclaiming imaginary successes. You have not utilised the terrible but vigorous elements which you had unloosed, and which have held the soldiers of France in check for two months; and yet these were the same men, maddened since by demagogic frenzy, with whom you might have aroused a patriotic fervour. It was the same National Guard, the same cannon, the same guns, the same forts, the same ramparts, the same barricades: all these forces remained paralysed in your feeble hands, but would have been sublime if used against the foreigner. . . . . In the interval, you go to Ferrières to shed your tears. I pity you! You pronounce there those dangerous words, which ought never to have been uttered by a statesman: 'Not a stone of our fortresses, not one inch of our territory.' Your conscience ought to feel the burden of this. For the honour of a French Minister, there ought in that conscience to have been enough of shame to require that another name than your own should be placed at the foot of an act declaring the grievous sacrifices rendered indispensable by accumulated faults. At Versailles the conqueror proposed the disarmament of the National Guard or that of the army, and you chose that of the soldiers, because you feared the Buonapartist elements in their ranks; while the elements of disorder in an irritated crowd—discontented with itself, badly directed, humiliated, and miserable—elements which might have been expected to culminate in the terrible explosion of the Commune—did not even preoccupy you one moment. You sell France to the negotiating enemy in exchange for your personal Republic. Why did you give way? I will tell you. It was because the Foreign Minister [Bismarck] made you comprehend the possibility of re-assembling the old Legislative Body; then you signed anything!"

Prince Napoleon went on to accuse M. Favre of having signed at Frankfort an aggravation of the preliminaries of peace; of having in this way bent his head to shame, because the Prussians let him see the possibility of an appeal to the French people; and of sacrificing France to his blind hatred of the Buonapartes. Finally, the Prince declared that the country could not find safety in the intrigues of parties—"in a white flag which France no longer remembers; in the negation of universal suffrage; in the White Terror succeeding the Red Terror; in the fusion of pretenders; in the return of the French Stuarts." The principle of modern right required "the abdication of all before the will of the people, freely and directly expressed;" and on this appeal France ought to insist. Such was the conclusion to which the Prince's diatribe was made to lead up. The greater part of the letter was doubtless invective; but it is seldom that invective has such a terrible groundwork of truth. The greatest objection that could be made to it was, that it charged M. Favre exclusively with events for which, indeed, he may have been mainly responsible, but the opprobrium of which must be shared by his colleagues in their proper degree.

The ghastly appearance of Paris gave point to the reproaches of Prince Napoleon. Acres of smoking ruins—vistas of shattered and blackened columns belonging to buildings that had once been among the finest in Europe—roofless palaces, devastated churches, houses utterly destroyed, or dinted with shot and shell—these were the sad sights which met the eye in Paris, as the results of that Republic which M. Favre and his friends had been trying for years to establish, and which they did not know how to manage when they had got it. At one time the fires seemed so menacing, and so far beyond the power of the Parisian firemen to subdue, that M. Thiers, on the 25th of May, asked Lord Lyons, our Ambassador in France, for the assistance of the London Fire Brigade in putting out the conflagration. The request was at once telegraphed to the proper quarter, and Lord Granville authorised an expenditure of £1,000 to send over a body of English firemen; he also set aside a Government vessel for their conveyance. Arrangements were made for despatching twelve engines and a hundred men; but, on the 26th, the French Government telegraphed that a mastery had been obtained over the flames, and that, consequently, the services of the English firemen would not be required. Hearty thanks for the proffered assistance were added. But, although by this time all fear of the fires spreading was at an end, it was still some days before they were extinguished. Passers-by in the streets were forced to assist in pumping on the ruins, and in burying the dead. The number of corpses was so large that it was necessary to take exceptional measures for getting rid of them, or the results might have been appalling. The effluvium at La Roquette was terrific; and, to prevent infection, numerous bodies were partially burned with petroleum, and buried in the Champ de Mars, under the pavements of the streets, and in the public gardens. At Belleville, a *café chantant* had been turned into an ambulance, and dead bodies lay about on the tawdrily-bedizened stage, and in the little drinking arbours in front. The condition of Père la Chaise was particularly horrible. As late as the 31st of May, the dead lay about on the grass in a double tier, powdered over with a coating of chloride of lime; and, as many of the tombstones and graves had been broken and torn up in the fighting, the decomposing remains of bodies that had long been buried were exposed



to view, and added to the frightful condition of the air. Smoke yet rose in heavy volumes from the chief centres of conflagration, and the remains of barricades, mixed with heaps of rubbish, still cumbered the streets. But the sight-seers were abroad, and it was shocking to see the levity with which the Parisians, of both sexes and of all ages, ate and drank, and laughed and flirted, and made joyous holiday, amidst the ruins of their fallen city. The stern hand of military law was again upon them, and they found an ignoble pleasure in that necessary but miserable precaution. A decree of M. Thiers, dated May 29th, ordered the disarmament of Paris, and the dissolution of the National Guard of the Department of the Seine; and, in a few days, more than 370,000 rifles had been given up or seized. Marshal MacMahon, moreover, required the National Guards to deliver their uniforms, and bluntly said, in an order of the day, that he would have no other uniform than that of the French army visible in the streets of Paris. He divided the city into four military districts, and at various localities stationed strong military posts, with sentinels at the ends of the streets. He even regulated a number of matters ordinarily coming within the cognisance of the police; such as forbidding the calling of newspapers about the streets, ordering the inhabitants to sweep their own doors as far as the middle of the road, and charging householders with the duty of removing the various impediments to free circulation. In consequence of these salutary measures, Paris, in the parts that had not been burnt, began to resume its wonted aspect with greater rapidity than might have been expected.

A firm and unhesitating rule was above all things necessary; and for the sake of this the Parisians submitted to restrictions which must have been especially onerous to them. It was ordained that all *cafés*, restaurants, and other places of public entertainment, were to be closed at eleven o'clock at night. The theatres were not to give any representations without previous authorisation, and all pieces to be acted were to be submitted to military approval before four o'clock P.M. on the day of performance, on pain of the theatre being closed. The sale of petroleum and all inflammable substances was strictly prohibited. Persons holding such substances were to declare them within twenty-four hours. Constant inspections were to be made, and any diminution found in the quantities, and unaccounted for, was to subject the offender to the military tribunals. The use of gas in the interior of houses was prohibited until after due examination of the state of the fittings and premises. Shots having been fired from certain dwellings, all persons were warned that such acts would bring the inhabitants under immediate military law; and at the same time the aid of all good citizens was invoked to aid in the re-establishment of order and peace in the streets of Paris. Such were the "liberties" which Jules Favre, Gambetta, Picard, Simon, and the rest of the Republican Opposition under the Empire, had secured by their *coup d'état* of September 4th. No doubt, such restrictions were most necessary. The wild beast having been unchained, it was imperative to tie him up again; but it would be hard to say why he had ever been set at large, unless it was to enable Messieurs of the Opposition to obtain the privileges and the emoluments of his keepers.

It was not without considerable satisfaction that Frenchmen generally saw some of these self-interested and incompetent statesmen quitting office shortly after the suppression of the rebellion. M. Picard left the Ministry of the Interior early in June, and M. Jules Favre the Foreign Ministry about the end of July. The extreme unpopularity of all connected with the Government of the National Defence made these resignations absolutely imperative. M. Favre returned to his profession as a lawyer, but was compelled, early in September, to admit the truth of some serious imputations on his personal character which had originally been brought against him by the Communists. The admission was made in the course of an action for libel which he brought against a M. Laluyé, who, on account of certain misstatements, was fined and imprisoned.

Of the number of Communists lost in the taking of Paris, various accounts were given; but they were little better than guesses, and were often so wild and extravagant as not to justify repetition. All that can be said with safety is that the killed and wounded amounted to many thousands. The total loss on the part of the Government troops was stated by Marshal MacMahon at 83 officers killed and 430 wounded, and 794 privates killed and 6,024 wounded; not a very serious list, when we consider that there was a week of very hard fighting. In some respects, the mischief effected by the Commune was reduced to a minimum by the firmness of those with whom the insurgents had to deal. Thus, the Sub-Governor of the Bank of France announced that, after sixty-seven days of the Reign of Terror, the establishment remained intact. The Bank had escaped from the violence of the Red Republic by the resolution of its managers, and by the payment of nine millions and a

half, constituting the balance of the municipal account in its hands, and a further sum of seven millions and a quarter, advanced on the authority of a blank order from Versailles. The municipality of Paris, however, was pillaged remorselessly, and the loss of property to the State, to the city, and to private individuals, owing to the destruction so wantonly inflicted, was of course enormous. The escape of Notre Dame was very remarkable. It is related that, at three o'clock on the 24th of May, M. Hanot, the house-surgeon on duty in the waiting-room of the neighbouring hospital, the Hôtel Dieu, was aroused by a great noise. Casks were being rolled through an opening in an adjacent barricade, and a lieutenant of the National Guards was demanding to be furnished with gimlets, locksmiths' tools, and a candle, in order that he might fire the cathedral. The director of the Hôtel Dieu, however, obtained a respite, on the ground that there were nine hundred sick and wounded in the hospital, and that the destruction of the one building would involve that of the other. Nevertheless, at about eleven o'clock the same morning, fire and smoke were seen issuing from one of the windows of the cathedral. The six house-surgeons were refused the use of the fire-engine; but with the aid of a fireman, and of a number of women and children, they were enabled to quench the flames. A subsequent examination showed that elaborate preparations had been made for consuming this grand old monument of the Middle Ages; but they happily failed. A guard was then organised for preserving the cathedral from further incendiary attempts, and at night that part of the city was in the hands of the Government army.

Every day brought forward fresh proofs of the deliberate guilt of the Commune in setting fire to Paris. Some of these, in addition to what has been previously mentioned, may be here set down. The Abbé Lamazou called attention to the fact that, about the middle of May, Delescluze issued a proclamation (little noticed at the time) in which, alluding to the defence of the city against the Versaillists, he said:—"After the ramparts, the barricades; after the barricades, the houses; after the houses, fire and mines—to burn and blow up all." In answer to some arguments of "a Communalist," published in the *Pall Mall Gazette* in the month of July, 1871, a Frenchman wrote to the same paper, to bring before the eyes of its readers what he called the avowals of the guilty parties themselves. These consisted of two orders issued by the Commune, and of which he held the *fac-similes*. The first was as follows:—

"Incendiez le quartier de la Bourse—ne craignez pas.

[Set fire to the quarter of the Bourse—have no fear.]

(Signed) L.-Col. PARENT.

[Stamp of Military Commandant of Hôtel de Ville]"

The second document ran thus:—

"Ministry of War.—Minister's Office.

"Citoyen Lucay—Faites de suite flamber Finances, et venez nous retrouver.

[Citizen Lucay—Set fire immediately to the Ministry of Finance, and rejoin us.]

(Signed) J. H. FERRÉ.

4 Prairial, 79.

[Stamp of the Ministry of War.]"

The first of these documents was found on the body of an insurgent killed on the 28th of May, at the attack on the Mairie of the Eleventh Arrondissement; the second in the pocket of an insurgent made prisoner at the barricade of the Rue Royale on the 24th of May. A Madame Leroy (a young and attractive widow, who, during the Red Republic, when she was the mistress of Urbain, a member of the Commune, is said to have helped herself to money out of the public treasury for articles of personal adornment) was in the habit of saying to her associates, according to evidence given before the third court-martial on the 18th of September:—"The Commune *must* triumph. Were it to turn out otherwise, we would not leave behind us a single pane of glass unbroken—not a stone upon a stone: we would destroy Paris. We would burn all; and when the Versaillais entered the city, they would tread on nothing but heaps of ruin. As for the priests, we have already despoiled those scoundrels; but we don't mean merely to kill them—we will cut them to pieces." On the other side of the question should be placed—that the entire evidence may be fairly weighed—some statements made by the regular Paris correspondent of the *Daily News*, in a communication published in that journal on the 10th of February, 1872. The writer here said:—

"I remember writing from Versailles, a very few days before the conquest of the Commune, that M. Thiers had been warned that stores of petroleum had been collected in the principal public buildings, and that if the Versailles army poured shells upon the city they would burn Paris to ashes. I state as an indisputable contribution to history that this warning was given, without, of course, knowing precisely how far the facts alleged, with a view of making Versailles hold its hand, were true. . . . No conclusive case has all this while ever been made out against a single *pétroleuse*. A Versailles court-martial, presided

over by a notoriously reckless president, who has been superseded, did indeed sentence three women to death without any evidence fit to hang a cat upon; but the sentence has been commuted. Ferré, who died at Satory by the side of Rossel, did, I believe, take an active part in the execution of the hostages, and the evidence on this point has been materially added to since his trial. But the evidence of his having written the famous despatch '*Faites flamber Finances*' (set fire to the Treasury) was of the most suspicious character, and rested upon a paper produced by the police, without any explanation of where it came from. It was proved that 'a' fire at the Treasury was caused by Versailles shells, and the allegation of the prosecution that the firemen, while professing to pour water on the flames, threw petroleum from their engines, was too ridiculous and too contrary to established facts to be relied upon by the Court. I have attended all the most important courts-martial at Versailles, and have never yet seen a clear case of arson established against any prisoner. Certainly (with the exception of the three *pétroleuses*, which was a ridiculous affair) no single sentence of death has been pronounced on that head. The theory of Versailles is that all the incendiaries either escaped abroad or have contrived to conceal themselves. It is not to be denied that many threats of burning Paris were uttered by the Communists; but the paucity of evidence to prove the execution of these threats against any individual whatever is most remarkable. I have made these retrospective observations on the occasion of a piece of news given by the *Liberté*—a most anti-Communist journal—that the famous chestnut-tree in the Tuileries ('Le Marronnier du 20 Mars') is not likely to bud this year because it was greatly damaged 'by fire from the Versailles batteries established at the Rond Point of the Etoile.' Now, this tree is only about two hundred yards from what was the central pavilion of the Tuileries. It must, therefore, have been struck by shells falling a little short, which were aimed, as the *Liberté* says, and as every one knows, against Federals entrenched in the Palace of the Tuileries itself. There is thus every presumption that the Versailles shells fired the Tuileries; and more especially in the absence of any evidence that the fire was lighted by the insurgents who were driven out by those shells."

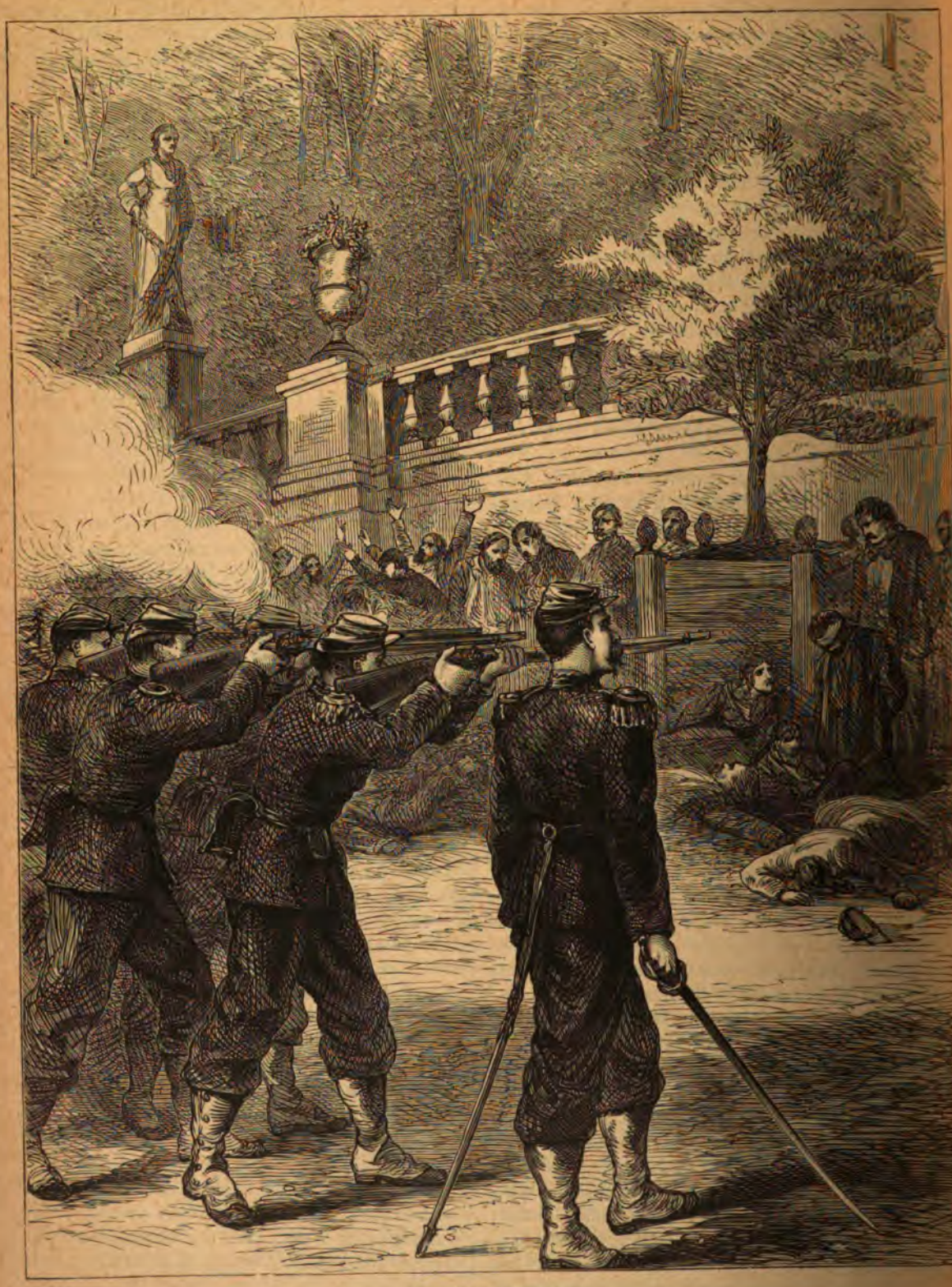
It is necessary that these statements and arguments should be quoted and borne in mind, so that the Communists may have the benefit of any doubt as to their guilt which may be thus suggested. But it will probably appear to most observers that such pleadings weigh very little indeed against the cited evidence tending to convict the Communists of a series of diabolical acts of incendiarism. The fact (which the correspondent himself admits) that the leaders of the Red Republic again and again threatened to burn down Paris if they were vanquished, is in itself a presumption of the very strongest kind against the Communists, when it is found that these repeated and most emphatic menaces were followed, as soon as the Government troops had entered the city, by numerous and simultaneous fires, in which some of the chief public edifices were destroyed. It is not, moreover, to be lightly believed that the written orders to fire the city, said to have been found on the bodies of insurgents, were forged by the Versailles Government, and that the official stamps of the Commune were also fraudulently manufactured to make up a case. Nor can we disregard the numerous statements made at the time by English newspaper correspondents who were on the spot, and examining the facts from an independent point of view, to the effect that petroleum was employed by the insurgents, in numerous forms, for ensuring and spreading the conflagration. Indeed, the indictment against the Communists is strengthened by the very statements of their apologist. Why this accumulation of stores of petroleum in the public buildings, of which the correspondent says M. Thiers was warned, unless for the purpose of carrying out the threats which, it is granted, were frequently uttered in view of an eventuality that at length arrived? Even if in one or two cases a structure was set on fire by the shells of the attacking force, who was answerable for that "accumulation" of inflammable oil within the buildings which rendered such fires inextinguishable? The argument that because a tree in the Tuileries gardens was struck by Versaillese shells, therefore the palace was set on fire by the Versaillese batteries, is a most extravagant piece of facile assumption. But after the danger of the Commune had passed away, there was an ungenerous tendency on the part of many English Radical writers to undervalue all evidence against the insurgents, and to magnify whatever might be supposed to tell against the authorities.

The courts-martial for the trial of the prisoners were opened at Versailles on August 7th. Ten weeks had elapsed since the suppression of the revolt, and complaints were made as to the delay in commencing those inquiries which were either to justify the arrests, or to release the captives. It is undoubtedly a most righteous principle that every accused person shall be brought to trial as speedily as may be, consistently with a due regard to the interests of public justice; but, on the present occasion, the postponement of the proceedings seems to have been unavoidable. The prisoners were to be tried according to French military law, which, in the main, is similar to the ordinary civil procedure. In both cases, the formal trial is preceded by elaborate examinations of principals and

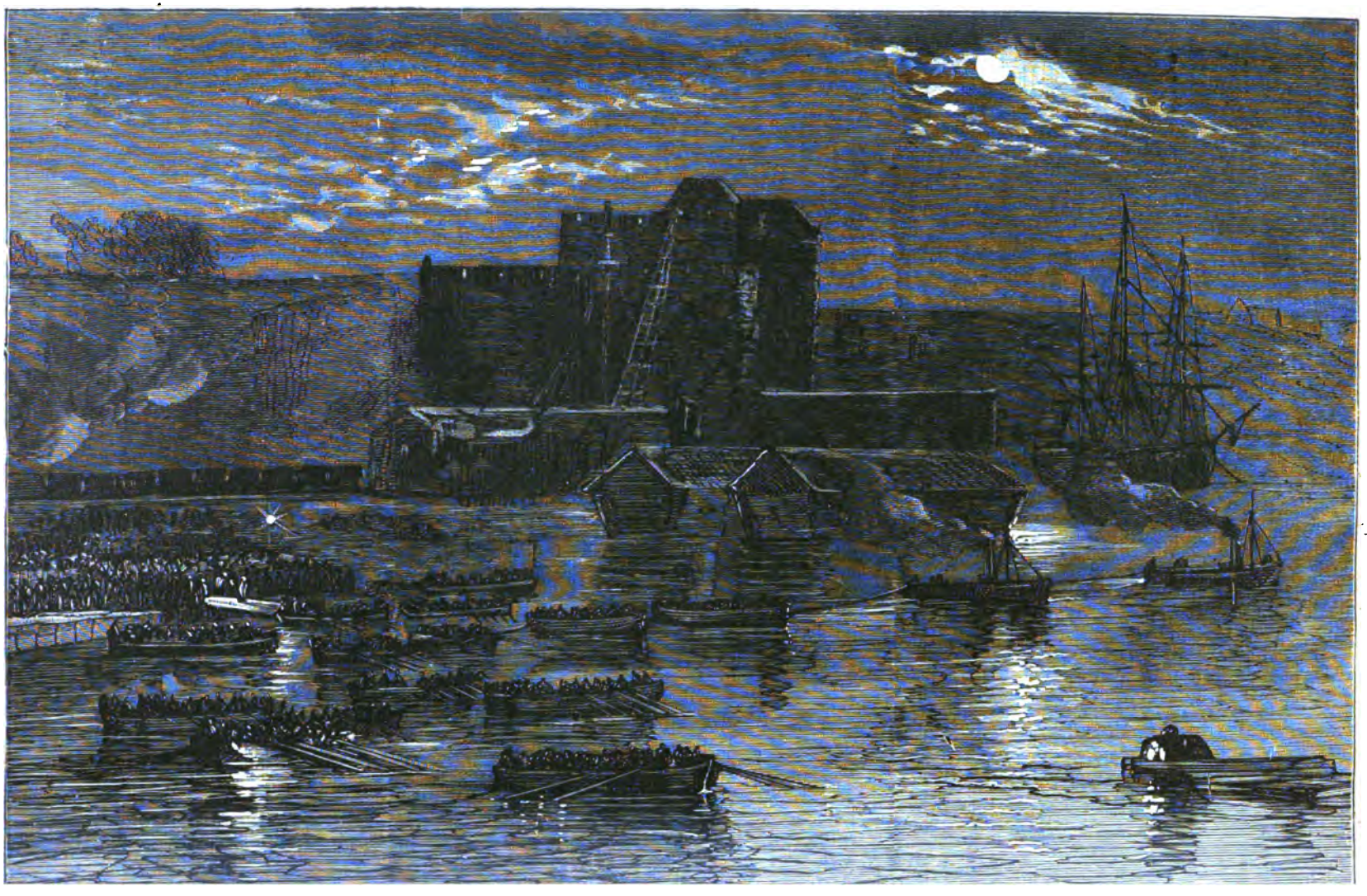
witnesses; and, as there were so many accused (their number was officially set down at 33,000), and such vast accumulations of evidence, it was impossible to get over the ground very quickly. In several instances, as many as fifty depositions were taken with reference to a single prisoner; and the examining officers were frequently obliged to go to distant places to complete the necessary evidence. All these things caused delay; but at length a legislative measure was passed, with a view to expediting matters by the appointment of a larger number of examining military officers than had previously been permitted by law. In the meanwhile, the condition of the prisoners—which at first was truly pitiable, owing to the overcrowding at Versailles and Satory—was greatly ameliorated, a large number of the men being drafted off to Brest, Belle-Ile, Rochefort, the Ile d'Aix, the Ile d'Oléron, and other places where there was better accommodation.

Seventeen Communal leaders—viz., Ferré, Assi, Urbain, Billioray, Jourde, Trinquet, Régère, Champy, Lullier, Rastoul, Paschal Grousset, Verdure, Ferrat, Descamps, Clément, Courbet, and Ulysse Parent—were placed at the bar on the 7th of August, to take their trial for participation in the great rebellion. Each prisoner was stationed between two *gendarmes*, and a line of *gendarmes*, with sword-bayonets fixed on their chassepôts, stood below the platform. The members composing the tribunal were seven officers, of whom the President was Colonel Merlin. The prisoners were defended, and the public were admitted to the court by special orders. The proceedings were commenced by the clerk reading the heads of the accusations made against the defendants. According to a summary published in the English papers, the indictment gave a synopsis of the doings of the International preparatory to the insurrection; recounted the revolt of the 18th of March, and the crimes resulting therefrom; and then recited charges first against Assi, who was accused of incitement to civil war, of usurpation of civil and military powers, and of having assumed Government functions, and assisted in issuing orders, the consequences of which were devastation, massacre, pillage, arson, and assassination. All the accused were further charged with conspiring for the overthrow of the Government, with incitement to civil war, and usurpation of office and power. Courbet was specially accused of complicity in the destruction of the Vendôme Column; Lullier of attempts to carry destruction, massacre, and pillage into Paris, of having taken possession of city property appertaining to the State, and of having incited soldiers to join the ranks of the rebels; Grousset of active participation in the revolt, and public incitement to contempt of existing laws and of the National Assembly; Verdure, Billioray, and Ferré, of arbitrary confiscations, wanton destruction of private dwelling-houses and public monuments, sacrilegious pillage of churches, and assassination—they having voted for the execution of the hostages; Jourde of financial transactions involving the violation of the seals of the public chests and the squandering of public charities; and Ferrat of having carried arms in command of a battalion against France. All the members of the Commune were made responsible for the destruction of property by fire.

The evidence brought forward against these men varied a good deal. Some portions were valuable and pertinent; others, utterly frivolous and worthless. The witnesses often gave their testimony in a highly-wrought, melodramatic style, and produced as much effect in court as a favourite actor does on the stage. Of cross-examination there was scarcely any, and this of course lessened the value of the evidence received. The demeanour of the President, Colonel Merlin, was characterised by all that rancorous partisanship which French Judges always display in political trials; and the counsel for the prisoners had enough to do to fight against the manifest leaning of the court. In the line of defence adopted, an attempt was made to show that power was forced upon the accused by an extraordinary combination of political difficulties; that, individually, they had very little to do with the mischievous acts and decrees of the body to which they belonged; and that for what little mischief they did they could either plead extenuating circumstances, or allege that their faults were counterbalanced by their good actions. With respect to Clément, it appears to have been really shown that he was an honest and well-meaning workman, whose head had been turned by the Socialist theories of Proudhon, and that he exhibited great zeal and courage in protecting, to the utmost of his power, priests, nuns, and churches. After he had been made Mayor of the Fifteenth Arrondissement, he told his former employer that he feared the Communists were a bad lot, and a set of Jacobins; but he did not see how he could leave them, and he might perhaps avert a good deal of harm by remaining. Extenuating circumstances were suggested on his behalf, and on that of Courbet and Ulysse Parent, by the Government prosecutor, in his summing up of the whole evidence. The worst thing alleged against Courbet, the artist, was his participation in the destruction of the Vendôme Column. He seems, indeed, though distinguished



SHOOTING COMMUNISTS.



as a painter, to have been a feeble character, with no political views whatever. Parent, also, appears to have been less guilty than most of the others, if guilty at all; and the prosecution dealt lightly with his case.

After a trial of four weeks, which nearly exhausted all concerned, from the Judges down to the accused, the sentences were pronounced on the evening of the 2nd of September. Ferré and Lullier (the latter of whom, it was thought, would escape on the ground of insanity, and because he had rendered, or attempted to render, some assistance in the suppression of the rebellion) were sentenced to death. Urbain and Trinquet were condemned to imprisonment for life, with hard labour. Assi, Billioray, Champy, Régère, Verdure, Ferrat, and Paschal Grousset, were doomed to transportation to a fortress. Jourde and Rastoul were simply transported. Courbet was to be imprisoned for six months, and to pay a fine of five hundred francs. Clément received the minimum punishment of three months' imprisonment; and Descamps and Ulysse Parent were acquitted.

On the 4th of September, six women, accused of aiding the fires with petroleum, were placed at the bar; and on the following day four were condemned to death, one to transportation to a fortress, and one to ten years' solitary confinement. Colonel Rossel was tried on the 8th of September, and condemned to death. Some informality rendered a second trial necessary; but it only led to the same result, and Rossel was shot, together with others, on the 28th of November. Madame Leroy, Urbain's mistress, was found guilty, with extenuating circumstances, of provoking to pillage, devastation, and massacre, and was sentenced to simple transportation. She begged hard not to be convicted of robbery, and the court, with some dissentients, acquitted her on all the counts charging complicity in the misappropriation of public money, and the robbery of money, watches, and rings, of which her paramour was convicted. This woman, when in court, affected a certain saintliness of demeanour and character; but it was proved that her antecedents were bad.

The trial of Rochefort commenced on the 20th of September; and together with this famous agitator were tried two of his colleagues on the *Mot d'Ordre*—Maurot and Maret. The result was that Rochefort was sentenced to transportation to a fortified place, Maurot to simple transportation, and Maret to five years' imprisonment. In November, the military authorities were engaged in the trial of twenty-six men supposed to have been concerned in the assassination of Generals Lecomte and Clément Thomas. The precise details of that tragical affair were not made much clearer by the investigation than they were before; but seven of the prisoners were sentenced to death, and nine others were condemned, some to perpetual and some to temporary imprisonment. Several men also were executed for being concerned in the assassination of the hostages.

Many thousands of prisoners were released after a while, as it was found that there would be no chance of obtaining convictions against them; but the trials still went on, with varying results, and extended far into 1872. In some cases the executions did not take place until long after the sentences had been pronounced. A Committee of Pardon was constituted, to share with M. Thiers the responsibility of re-considering the chief condemnations. Some of the sentences were commuted; but, on the whole, mercy was not very popular in France at that time; and the numerous military executions on the plain of Satory gave a dismal reputation to that locality. Truly, the Republic was baptised in blood; and it remained to be seen whether it would survive the misery of its early days, or succumb to the loathing and horror which, to many minds, were associated with its very name.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Triumphal Entry of German Troops into Berlin—Decoration of the Linden—Progress of the Emperor—Brilliant Appearance of the Various Regiments—Unveiling of the Statue of King Frederick William III.—Review of French Troops on the Race-ground of Longchamps—The Orleans Princes—Rumoured Fusion of the Two Branches of the Bourbons—Speech of M. Thiers on the Condition and Prospects of the Country—The Elections of the Duc d'Aumale and the Prince de Joinville—Appearance of the Princes in the Assembly—Letter of the Comte de Chambord—Position of the Republic in the Summer of 1871—M. Thiers made President—New Arrangements consequent on the Change of Title—Policy and Methods of Action of M. Thiers—M. Gambetta "the Coming Man"—Prospects of the Republic—Provision against Revolution—M. Thiers on Monarchy and Republicanism—The French Army Bill of 1872—Arrangements with the Germans for Expediting their Evacuation of France—The French Loans of 1871 and 1872—Condition of Germany—Shadows of the Future.

THE suppression of the Commune in Paris was speedily followed by the triumphal entry of the German troops into Berlin—a celebration which may be described as the last act of that terrible

war-drama which began only eleven months before. This interesting ceremonial took place on the 16th of June, when forty-five thousand men, deputations from the several armies which had taken part in the war, and representing all the German nationalities in alliance under the leadership of Prussia, mustered on the Tempel-hof Feld to form in procession. The central avenue of the adjacent Linden—one of the finest thoroughfares in Europe—was bordered with French cannon, and with pillars exhibiting the official war-telegrams, connected by festoons and garlands of fresh flowers. Five triumphal arches crossed the line of march at various points; and between two columns placed on each side of the avenue was displayed a magnificent hanging of canvas, covered with choice paintings in wax colours, representing the union and the triumphs of Germany. A bright, warm summer day favoured the celebration, and everything passed off well, except that many of the soldiers dropped from heat and exhaustion, and that the Emperor's youngest brother, Prince Albrecht, fainted and fell from his horse from the same cause, during the procession early in the afternoon. The Emperor appeared in the Tempelhof Feld at eleven o'clock in the morning. He was surrounded by all the Royal Princes of Germany, and followed by the Empress, the Crown Princess, and Princess Charles. After an inspection of the three lines into which the troops were divided, the Emperor placed himself at the head of the First Division of the Guard, and passed down the Belle-Alliance Strasse and the Königgrätz Strasse to the Brandenburg Gate. Here he was welcomed, in the name of united Germany, by sixty young ladies, clad in white and blue, who presented him with a laurel wreath of gold, and read an address. An official reception by the representatives of the city of Berlin followed a little way further on; and then, preceded and accompanied by a brilliant Staff of Princes, soldiers, and statesmen—amongst whom were the Crown Prince, Prince Frederick Charles, Count Moltke, Prince Bismarck, and General von Roon—the Emperor rode down the Linden, through the ranks of captured French cannon and mitrailleuses.

The crowd along the route was very great, and the cheering incessant. Describing the general appearance of the scene, the Special Correspondent of the *Daily News* said:—

"Here is a bright clump of glittering steel—a regiment of Guard Infantry. This snake-like coil here, a flowing river of glitter, is another, marching on to take up a position. With what accuracy it falls into its place! And now, over the Kreuzberg, is pouring a flood of white, tipped with shining brass. It is the Cuirassiers of the Guards. The splendid horsemen seem interminable; in squadron after squadron they come—swords clinking, helmets and cuirasses flashing in the bright sun, heels down and toes up, yet riding rather shorter than our British riding-masters would care to see. At a spanking trot comes the Guard Dragoon Brigade, in brilliant case. No traces of campaigning about them. Nothing save the medals to recall that fearful afternoon when the brigade galloped straight up the slope to the north of Vionville, right into the jaws of death. The chassepôt bullets of Lebœuf are not raining into them now; no pale death is looking them in the face. And here are the Hussars of the Guard coming on the field sedately and slowly by another route. Their red-brimmed shabracques are very bright in their newness; they have not had the mud of France on them. The noble horses arch their necks, and jingle bits and collar-chains; they are as proud to-day as are their riders. There is a rattle and a rumble, something between a cavalry charge and a dozen of Pickford's waggons on the stones—the whole world is not yet asphalted. It is the Horse Artillery riding furiously, for it seems it is late. With a steady tramp and roll advances the Foot Artillery Division, plain, but thoroughly serviceable. The men who man these grim toys do not care about fancy dresses, but about straight shooting. And here comes a contributional testimony to the straightness of their shooting—the 'combined battalion' with the eighty-one eagles, colours, and standards that once belonged to the French army, glittering and waving in its van. There are the eagles of the Imperial Guard, laid down, with tears and gnashing of teeth, on that 29th of October when 170,000 Frenchmen surrendered in a mass. No wonder that the chosen non-commissioned officers—Prussians, Bavarians, Saxons, Würtembergers, Hessians, Badeners—march proudly under such a burden as this. The world has not seen such a pregnant show as these eighty-one emblems of victory."

Strange to say, several Frenchmen were observed looking on at this sight, so full of humiliation for their country. They congregated in the balconies of the French hotel with their wives and children, and seemed to enjoy the brilliance of the show. The Emperor produced a great effect, sitting straight and square on a dark dapple-brown horse; and it was a moment full of intense emotion, as well as a spectacle of remarkable grandeur, when the eagles and standards taken from the French drooped to the ground before the presence of the conqueror. The Empress, who followed in an open carriage, bowed repeatedly, but with the stiffness and formality of the old German manner. Very different was the demeanour of the Imperial Princess—the Princess Royal of England. She was full of enthusiasm and joyous pride, and seemed to sympathise to the utmost with the humblest actor in that splendid scene. One of the most noteworthy

figures in the procession was that of old Marshal Wrangel, the contemporary of Blücher, still looking erect and soldier-like in a cuirassier uniform and plumed helmet. Having reached the statue of Blücher, the Emperor took up a position, surrounded by the Princes and the general Staff, and the whole of the Guards, with detachments from every regiment belonging to the Confederation, marched past for the space of two hours. When this was finished, the Emperor and suite crossed the bridge at the end of the Linden, and unveiled the statue of King Frederick William III.—the monarch under whom the French were driven out of Prussia in the early years of the present century. Around this statue were grouped seventy-nine French eagles and colours captured during the war; and the uncovering of the figure re-excited the flagging enthusiasm of the crowd. The ceremony (which included a solemn musical performance, prayers, and speeches) was over at half-past four, and the rest of the day was devoted to mirth and rejoicing. At night, the city was brilliantly illuminated, and the French Embassy was the only dark spot in the midst of a great glow of variegated light.

Perhaps as a sort of counter-demonstration, the French determined to have a review of their own. It took place on the race-ground of Longchamps, on the 29th of June, and was a successful affair, although of course wanting in the intoxicating associations of the Prussian triumph. The associations were indeed altogether melancholy. The army thus paraded had been utterly beaten by the foreigner, and had since won a doubtful reputation in civil contest with their own countrymen. But Frenchmen like to see their army about them, and it was some comfort, after their late misfortunes, to have ocular proof that they were once more in possession of a brilliant, well-disciplined, and imposing force. At least 80,000 men, if not more, were thus brought together, and the Grand Stand was gaily fitted up with flags, and crowded with spectators. M. Thiers arrived in a carriage at half-past one P.M., and took his seat in the tribune which used to be occupied by the Emperor Napoleon. His reflections must have been singular. He had succeeded to the power of the man whom he had so long opposed in Parliament; and here he was, reviewing a French army on the very spot where, barely four months before, the Prussian monarch was marshalling a German army which had just subjugated France and entered Paris. The weather was bright and pleasant, but the toilettes of the ladies were very sober, in keeping with the double period of mourning through which the country had just passed. Large crowds were present to witness the review, and the general impression produced on the populace was good. M. Thiers was accompanied by his wife and sister-in-law, and was surrounded by the chief Ministers. He was received with much favour, and repeatedly bowed his thanks. In a stand to his right, among the members of the Assembly, were the Orleans Princes. "Precisely at two," said a contemporary account, "Marshal MacMahon and his Staff came up the racecourse at a canter. The Marshal, conspicuous on a coal-black Arab charger, took up his position exactly opposite M. Thiers's pavilion, on the other side of the course. Between, there was a wide space for the troops to march past. The Marshal was received with loud cheers. Directly he had taken up his position, the march-past commenced. General l'Admirault, commanding the First Corps, took up his position on MacMahon's right, to watch his corps march past, and the brigade was preceded by two companies of Engineers and a battalion of Chasseurs. The Line marched by in double columns of companies, six companies to a regiment. Only two battalions from each regiment of the corps stationed in Paris were present. After the l'Admirault corps came the 2nd, Cissy commanding; then the 4th, under Douai; and next came the reserve, with Vinoy at its head. This corps was stronger than its predecessors, as it had three battalions to a regiment, not being stationed in Paris. Vinoy was much cheered on leaving MacMahon to rejoin his corps. Then came the cavalry under Galifet—Chasseurs and Lancers one regiment, two regiments of Hussars, and one of mounted Gendarmes. They went by at a trot, but none too steadily. Last came a brigade of Horse Artillery." The men observed a somewhat gloomy silence throughout the march past, and uttered no cries whatever. They were probably divided in their allegiance, and it was certainly the most prudent course to abstain from demonstrations. When the last battery had past, Marshal MacMahon and his Staff rode across the course, and saluted M. Thiers and the Assembly. M. Thiers, who at the best did not make a very picturesque Cæsar, had an awkward habit of giving way to his feelings on every occasion. When the people rushed forward and cheered him, he was greatly affected, and wept like a child. He left the ground at half-past five, and the crowds then quietly dispersed.

One of the difficulties of M. Thiers, during the early days of his rule, was as to the position to be occupied in France by the Orleans Princes. They had re-entered the country after the revolution of September 4th, in spite of the laws exiling them;

and at the elections in February they had been returned to the Assembly. The question then arose as to whether they could be allowed to take their seats. This important point was referred to a Committee of the House for consideration, and it was felt that much might depend on the issue. On the one hand, it seemed undesirable to maintain laws of proscription which had been passed under a former political condition; on the other, it was feared by the Republicans that if the Orleanists got a firm footing in the country, they would immediately plot for the restoration of their family to monarchical power. There had been much talk of a fusion of the two branches of that family, and of an arrangement by which the head of the house, the Comte de Chambord, should be allowed to enjoy the throne, on the understanding that he was to remain unmarried, so that on his death the sovereignty might pass without dispute to the Comte de Paris, grandson of Louis Philippe, and head of the younger branch of the Bourbons. The fusion had not really taken place; it had passed away in idle discussion, as in previous years when the subject had been mooted; but the possibility of such an arrangement alarmed the anti-monarchical party, and even caused some uneasiness to M. Thiers.

The reporter of the committee appointed by the Assembly was about to present the report on the 5th of June, when M. Thiers, interposing, observed that the question was extremely grave, and that it could not be resolved without the fullest explanations. He was ill, fatigued, and suffering, and asked that the discussion be postponed until the 8th. He pledged himself that the delay would be beneficial to the harmony it was desired to arrive at, and added that it was the opinion of the committee that the verification of the election of the Princes, and the abolition of the laws exiling them from France, should be settled simultaneously. The Chamber agreed to the adjournment, and on the day mentioned the subject came on for discussion. The report of the committee recommended the abolition of the laws exiling the Princes. The debate was begun by M. Leblond, the Procurator-General, who argued that civil war was yet latent in the large towns, and that this rendered great prudence and moderation necessary. The moment was inopportune for adopting the views of the committee, and the effect of their adoption would be to weaken the authority of the Chief of the Executive. When M. Thiers ascended the tribune, he remarked that he had never before found himself faced by so difficult a question, He had at first been opposed to the abrogation of the laws of proscription, but since then he had assented to the Bill. The posture of affairs had completely altered since a month previously. Then, they were in the crisis of a civil war; now, they had obtained one of the greatest victories ever achieved. Europe thanked them, for they had saved the whole continent from anarchy. Their defeats were forgotten; their victory alone was remembered. "At the same time," added M. Thiers, "we must not delude ourselves; the insurrection is disarmed, but not appeased. The excitement is still great in the public mind, and we must avoid providing fresh material for stimulating popular passions. It is requisite that work should be resumed. Let me remind the Assembly that one of the great weapons of which the Commune made use was the assertion that the Republic was in danger. Prudence therefore requires that no pretext for such a supposition should be furnished by us. We must imbue the country with confidence, in our wisdom and our unity of purpose. Labour is ready to start once more into activity; large trading orders are everywhere forthcoming; but the great capitalists are carefully watching the action of the Assembly, anxious to know whether it will remain united. If we inspire them with confidence, we shall be able to meet all our requirements." Those requirements, he went on to demonstrate, would be very great. The first thing necessary was to obtain the evacuation of French territory by the Germans. They had to feed 500,000 of these unwelcome guests, and until the indemnity was paid they would be unable to collect the taxes in the invaded departments. In the meanwhile, the revenue showed a deficiency of 400,000,000 francs. They must therefore have recourse to credit, and for this they required the confidence of Europe. M. Thiers said he felt much respect for the Bourbons, but added—"You think you are doing a great act of generosity. You are doing something quite different. The laws it is proposed to abrogate are not laws of proscription, but laws of precaution. Two Governments cannot co-exist upon the same soil. I blamed the Republicans in 1848 for abrogating the laws of proscription. I said then to Louis Napoleon, 'These imprudent Republicans have recalled you. You will be their master—mine you shall not be.'" M. Thiers professed great friendship for the Orleans family, but declared that his friendship for his country was superior to all others. Alluding to the last revolution, he said:—"It is the fashion now to attack that revolution; but people forget that they wished for it, and they do not remember the services it has rendered. The men of the 4th of September were wrong in desiring to continue the war; but the fault was not com-

mitted in Paris, which was bound to close its gates against the enemy. It was committed outside Paris by men in power, who carried on a policy of madness, a senseless policy, which substituted the action of a few for the authority of France." M. Thiers was here glancing at Gambetta and his colleagues of the Delegate Government, but with more rancour than

They ought to comprehend that a Constitutional Monarchy is in substance a Republic, of which the President is hereditary. The speaker then continued :—

"I have accepted the Republic as a deposit, and I will not betray the trust. The future does not concern me. I merely look at the present. I serve no party,

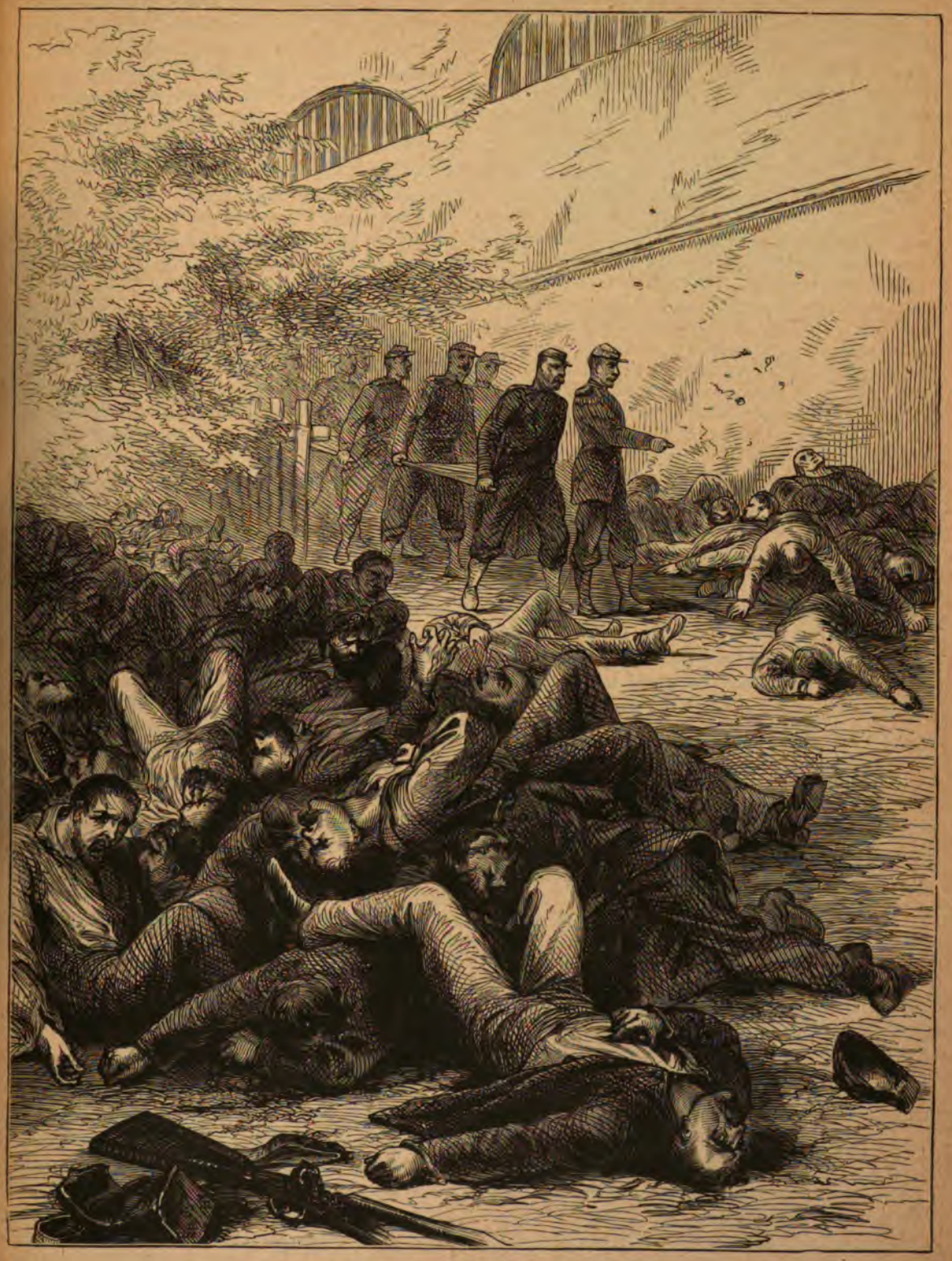


COMMUNIST PRISONERS.

1. Ferré. 2. Assi. 3. Urbain. 4. Billioray. 5. Jourde. 6. Trinquet. 7. Champy. 8. Régère. 9. Lullier. 10. Rastoul. 11. Pindy. Grousset. 12. Verdure. 13. Ferrat. 14. Clément. 15. Courbet. 16. Ulysse Parent. 17. Lisbonne. 18. Descamps.

fairness. If Paris was bound to close its gates against the enemy, surely the provinces were bound to do the utmost they could to assist that defence. Pursuing the more immediate subject of his argument, M. Thiers said that for forty years he had striven to secure for France a Constitutional Monarchy, such as exists in England. He found greater liberty in London than in Washington ; but the French Princes had not always understood the conditions necessary for securing such liberty.

and in the choice of generals I never consider their political opinions, but the interests of the country. All the cities of France have sent deputations to complain that the National Assembly wished to get rid of the Republic. I replied that it was false, and I praised the Assembly, adding that the deputations were unjust, and that the Assembly was more liberal than myself. A certain number of its members, who entertained Monarchical opinions, have had the wisdom to restrain their preferences. I told them that it was not the Assembly that threatened the Republic, but themselves



SCENE IN THE PRISON OF LA ROQUETTE.

"Do nothing,' I added, 'that might incite wicked men and you will render a great service to the cause of the Republic.' The deputations replied, 'We believe in your honesty; but after victory you will not have the same control over the Assembly.' I retorted that I thought the Assembly would continue to have the same confidence in me, but that I should resign in case the safety of the Republic should be threatened. In this manner I have quieted their apprehensions, which might have been a cause of great danger, and, had I not made those replies, the tranquillity of the provinces might have been disturbed. I hope the Assembly will approve my conduct; but if I have gone too far, I alone shall be compromised. If you seek to hasten a solution you may throw France into an immediate and terrible civil war. My duty is to make the truce last as long as possible, and to transform it, if we can, into a perpetual peace, as I feel confident that the rupture of that truce would bring about great misfortunes. I do not desire to discuss whether or not a Monarchy may be possible at some future time; but, in order that it should be durable, it is necessary that no one should be able to say that the Republic has not had a fair trial."

M. Thiers ultimately gave his support to the abrogation of the laws of proscription, as the Orleans Princes had pledged themselves not to take their seats in the Assembly, so as to remove the fears which had been entertained. Should his hopes be disappointed, he would take such measures as he might think advisable, and afterwards ask the sanction of the Assembly. He concluded his speech by repeating that he would deceive no one. Some other members addressed the House, and ultimately the Bill abrogating the laws of proscription was adopted by 484 votes against 103. The elections of the Duc d'Aumale and the Prince de Joinville were then declared valid by 448 against 113.

The Princes appeared satisfied with this arrangement at the time; but, at the commencement of December, on the re-assembling of the Legislative Chamber after an adjournment, they declared that they regarded their promise not to take their seats as having only a temporary character, and that, as the state of affairs had altered a good deal during the intermediate time, and the Republic appeared to be definitively constituted, they might be allowed to enter the House. In two interviews with M. Thiers they set forth these views, but could not induce him to release them from their bond. Not desiring to make difficulties in the matter, however, he finally referred them to the Assembly, which, on the 18th of December, refused priority to a motion investing the Princes with the full plenitude of their rights, and then, with only two dissentient votes, affirmed a motion, saying—"The Assembly, considering that it has no responsibility to assume nor advice to offer on engagements in which it had no part, passes to the order of the day." The Princes were thus left to decide the question by their own interpretation of the meaning of their engagement; and, although it was evident that neither the Assembly nor the Government was favourable to their appearance, they resolved to take their seats. Accordingly, on the 19th, they entered the House, amidst some marks of curiosity, but without any demonstrations of support or opposition.

The Comte de Chambord, seeing that he had not the slightest chance of making way in France, took a species of pompous farewell of his countrymen in a characteristically foolish address issued early in July, 1871. "Frenchmen!" he exclaimed, "I am in the midst of you. You have opened the gates of France to me, and I could not renounce the happiness of again seeing my country. But I do not wish by a prolonged sojourn to give new pretexts to stir up men's minds, already so disturbed at this moment. I therefore leave this Chambord, which you gave me, and of which I have with pride borne the title for these last forty years in the land of exile. As I depart, I am anxious to tell you that I do not separate myself from you. France is aware that I belong to her. I cannot forget that the monarchical right is the patrimony of the nation, nor can I forego the duties which it lays upon me with respect to it. I will fulfil these duties—you may take my word as an honest man and as a King for it. By God's help we shall establish together, whenever you may wish it, on the broad basis of administrative decentralisation and of local franchises, a Government in harmony with the real wants of the country. We shall give, as a security for those public liberties to which every Christian people is entitled, universal suffrage honestly exercised, and the control of the two Chambers; and we shall resume the national movement of the latter end of the eighteenth century, restoring to it its true character." And further on he reintroduced the old flourish about the White Flag of Henry IV., and oracularly said:—"France, cruelly disenchanted by unexampled disasters, will perceive that it is not by going from error to error that one can reach truth, that it is not by shifts that one can escape eternal necessities. She will call me, and I will come to her with my entire devotion, my principles, and my flag." The anticipated "call" was never made, and the flag remained till his death, stored with other mediæval lumber, in the possession of

the chivalrous prince who certainly wrote the silliest manifestoes of any potentate out of business.

Every day made it more clear that, whatever might be the final decision, the country was not desirous, at the moment, of altering the form of government. The Republic had certainly gained in strength by showing that it was both able and willing to put down the anarchists. What the mass of the French people wanted was a stable political system of some kind—almost of any kind. They doubted at first whether the Republic had any such quality, and they might have occasion to doubt it again; for it is still far from proved that this mode of government, with its constantly recurring elections to the Chief Magistracy, and its perpetual incentives to partisan warfare, is fitted for so excitable a nation as the French. But in the summer of 1871 the Republic had gained what the Head of the State was justified in calling a great victory over the enemies of social order. The country desired repose, and was inclined to let affairs go on smoothly under their present guidance until the necessity of a change was made apparent. M. Thiers, moreover, constantly became, if not more popular (for he was not the kind of man to inspire popularity), at least more securely rooted in the popular esteem as the most likely politician to tide over the difficulties of the day. During the month of August, 1871, the subject of perpetuating and consolidating his power was brought before the Assembly. After much discussion of counter-propositions, which at one time threatened a Ministerial crisis, an important modification of the arrangement which had been come to in February was resolved on. M. Thiers was originally appointed Chief of the Executive Power, under the control of the Assembly. It was now proposed to make him President of the Republic. On the 28th of August, M. Vitet read the report of the committee to which the question had been referred, and submitted the following Bill:—

"The National Assembly, considering that it has the right to exercise constituent powers, the essential attribute of the sovereignty with which it is invested, and which imperious duties which it had to undertake from the outset, and which are far from being accomplished, have alone prevented it from exercising hitherto; considering that, until definitive institutions have been established in the country, the wants of labour, the interests of commerce, and the development of industry, require that the existing provisional institutions should assume in the eyes of all, if not that stability which is the work of time, at least that which may be ensured by an agreement of wishes and a pacification of parties; considering that a new and more precise title and appellation, without changing anything in the essence of things, may have the effect of rendering more evident the intention of the Assembly frankly to continue the honest essay commenced at Bordeaux; that the prolongation of the functions conferred upon the Chief of the Executive Power, by being henceforth limited to the period of duration of the labours of the Assembly, frees those functions from the unstable and precarious character which they may seem to possess, without the sovereign rights of the National Assembly suffering the least diminution—since in any case the supreme right of decision belongs to the Assembly, and the combination of fresh guarantees will ensure the maintenance of those Parliamentary principles which are at once the security and the glory of the country; decrees—

"I. The Chief of the Executive Power shall assume the title of President of the Republic, and shall continue to exercise, under the authority of the Assembly, until it has concluded its labours, the functions which were delegated to him in writing on the 17th of February, 1871.

"II. The President of the Republic shall promulgate the laws transmitted to him by the President of the Assembly; shall ensure and watch over the execution of the laws, and reside at the seat of the Assembly. The President of the Republic will be entitled to address the National Assembly whenever he may deem it necessary, and on previously informing the President of the Assembly of his intention to do so. He shall appoint and dismiss the Ministers, who will be responsible to the Assembly. Each of his decrees will be countersigned by a Minister.

"III. The President of the Republic is responsible to the Assembly."

To the preliminary "considerations," M. Dufaure proposed an additional clause, acknowledging the eminent services rendered to the country by M. Thiers during the previous six months, and alluding to the guarantees offered by the duration of the power he held from the Assembly. The debate commenced on the 30th of August, when it was announced that the committee accepted M. Dufaure's complimentary amendment. The first clause of the Bill, which claimed constituent powers for the Assembly, led to a long and rather stormy debate, in the course of which M. Gambetta, to the surprise of those who recollected his high-handed assertion of Republican prerogatives during the days of the Provisional Government, declared that the Assembly was not competent to decide in favour of a Republic or a Monarchy, and that he would not accept a Republic at its hands. He therefore opposed the assertion of constituent powers, which he said would be a real apple of discord thrown into the country; but the clause was carried by 433 votes against 227. On the following day (August 31st), the remaining paragraphs of the preamble were agreed to, and the House

then proceeded to discuss the various clauses of the Bill proper. The first was adopted by 530 votes against 68. The second and third were also passed, and the whole Bill was ultimately adopted by 480 votes against 93.

There cannot be a doubt that, having reference to any principles of democratic or popular self-rule, the exercise of constituent powers on the part of an Assembly which had merely been elected to decide on the question of peace or war, at a period when the subject of the form of government was not before the country, and could not be considered, was a gross usurpation. The Bill itself spoke with considerable reticence and caution of the Republic as the final form of the new political condition, and referred to it as an experiment, which might be set aside by "definitive institutions." What the Assembly chiefly desired was to retain power in its own hands until it could come to terms with the most available man for rebuilding the fabric of the State with some chance of stability. A prosperous and spirited nation would have repudiated such an assumption; but France was so weary, sick at heart, and broken down, that she was glad, for the sake of quietness, to let the Assembly do pretty nearly what it would. In the absence of a direct appeal to the country, the new arrangement was doubtless the best that could have been devised. The continuance of a provisional state of things was very prejudicial to the dignity of France, and a perpetual invitation to disturbance. M. Thiers acquired greater importance, in the eyes both of his own countrymen and of foreign Powers, by being invested with larger functions and a more distinct title. Some formal re-arrangements followed the change thus effected. By a decree of the 2nd of September, 1871, the President of the Republic, in case of absence or prevention, delegated to one of the Ministers the right to convoke the Ministerial Council, and to preside; and the Minister so delegated was to bear the title of Vice-President of the Council of Ministers. M. Dufaure—probably as a reward for his courtly addition to the "considerations" of the Bill—was appointed to this office. All the Ministers placed their resignations in the hands of the President, who, after formally accepting them, requested his coadjutors to resume their portfolios.

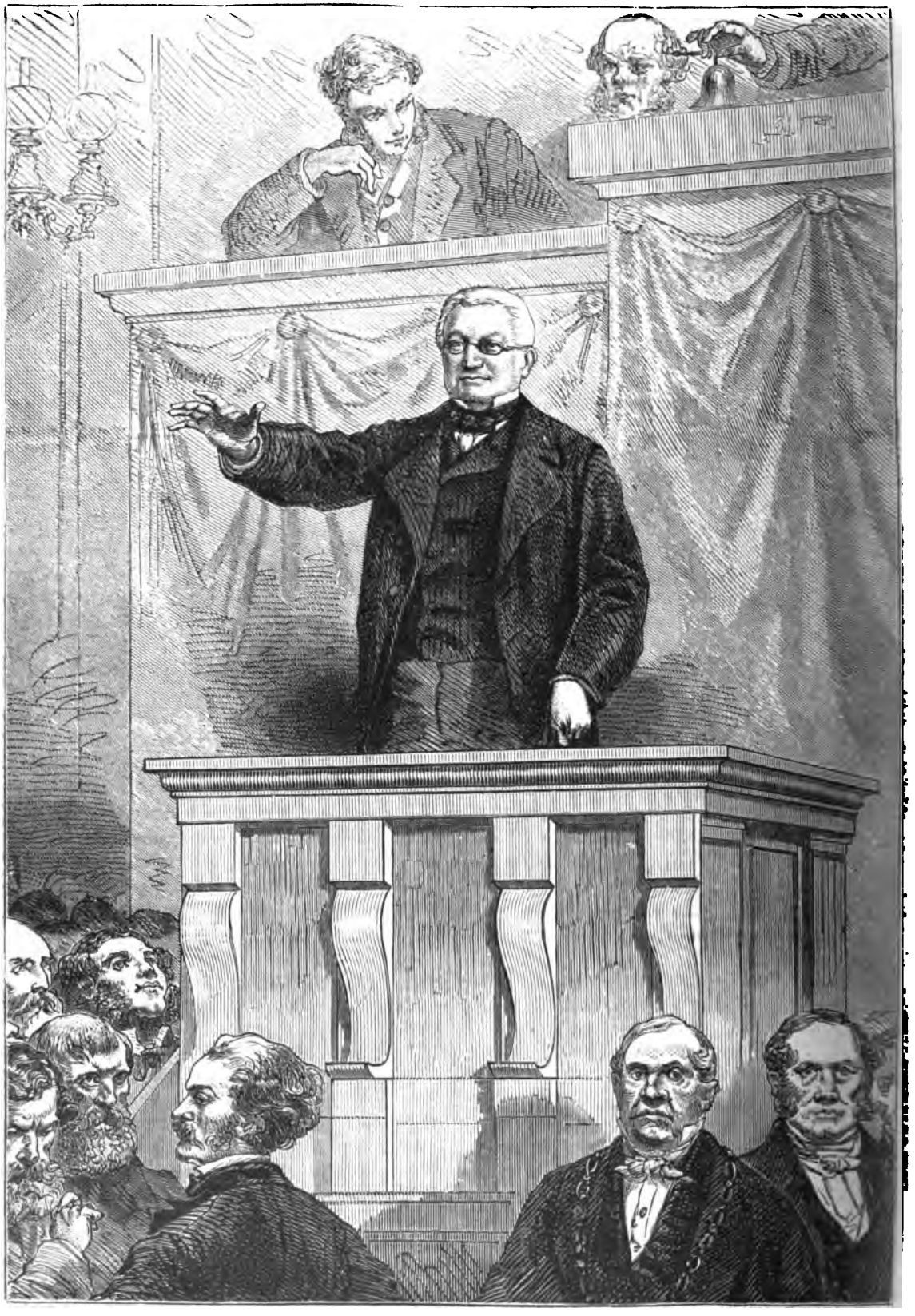
The policy of M. Thiers, as President of the Republic, was exactly what any observer of politics might have mapped out beforehand. His astute, trained intellect, fertility of resource, adroitness of speech, and long and varied knowledge of affairs—the respectability of his character, the gravity of his age, the brilliance of his reputation, and the unquestionable patriotism which animated his views, even when those views were narrow—did great service to France in lifting her out of the gulf of desolation, misery, and shame into which she had been precipitated. It was an encouraging and in some sort a noble sight, to see a man of seventy-four entering on a task of such appalling magnitude, and carrying it out with a fair measure of success. But M. Thiers was in many respects a politician of a bygone date. He was an incorrigible Protectionist, and he withdrew from the Treaty of Commerce with England, and saddled the manufactures and commerce of his country with many onerous exactions as a means of raising revenue. He was always opposed to Italian unity; and, though not so rash as to commit himself to any undoing of the work of recent years, contrived to place France in a position of implied unfriendliness to Italy. He leant sufficiently towards the Pope to annoy the Liberal party in France, and yet not sufficiently to obtain the hearty support of the priesthood. He did comparatively little towards giving the French people that free, sound, and unbigoted education of which they stood so much in need; and if he reorganised the army, it was only at an enormous cost, and by methods of which the advisability was doubted.

The Act of August 31st, 1871, gave M. Thiers, as will have been observed, the right of addressing the Assembly from the tribune when he pleased—an unusual privilege with the Chief Magistrate of a State, and one which involves some loss of dignity, since it brings an official who ought to be raised above the passions of debate into personal collision with the representatives of the nation. The art of oratory, however, was so strong a weapon with M. Thiers that he could not afford to relinquish it. He frequently spoke in the House after his elevation to the Presidency, and sometimes engaged in a smart interchange of blows with refractory members. He had a petulant, forward way, at difficult seasons, of complaining of his fatigues, his age, and his failing health, declaring that to be relieved from power would be the most welcome thing that could happen to him, and threatening to resign if not allowed to do as he liked. By these rather feminine arts, he literally cajoled the Assembly into subordinating its own ideas to his; and then M. Thiers wept and relented, and the reconciliation was complete. This state of affairs, however, could not continue long. It was not in the nature of things that the man of 1830 could remain for more than a very few years, at the utmost, in the position of Dictator. He had to give place to younger heads; and the chances

appeared to be that, should the Republic be preserved, M. Gambetta would be "the coming man." He delivered various speeches in the provinces, which, besides exhibiting all his well-known fervour of crusading zeal on behalf of the Republic, were characterised by a breadth of Liberalism, and a quality of practical statesmanship, which the world was hardly prepared to find in this extreme politician. Notwithstanding that M. Thiers frequently spoke in disparaging terms of the ex-Dictator of Bordeaux, the latter gave considerable support to the existing Government, and did ample justice to the ability, energy, and self-devotion of M. Thiers. It was thought at that time that if, with maturer years, M. Gambetta should overcome the demagogic fury and undisciplined excess by which his good qualities had hitherto been impaired, he might have a brilliant and a useful future before him. But it was said also that he must learn to forget party interests in French interests.

In the meanwhile, however, nothing was settled, and it was quite uncertain whether France would finally accept the Republic, or again choose one of the numerous forms of Monarchy. The Assembly hesitated to pronounce its own dissolution, and the people remained unconsulted, except by detached elections. Paris was still discrowned as the capital of France; M. Thiers, though favourable to a return to old usages, being unable to overcome the fears of the rural deputies. So entirely was the country devoid of any common national sentiment, and so great was the tendency to party divisions, that to celebrate the 4th of September, the birthday of the Third Republic, or the anniversaries of the First and Second Republics, was as much forbidden as to observe the 15th of August, the fête-day of Napoleon. Dreading the future, and not even assured as to the present, the Assembly distrusted M. Thiers, distrusted the Revolution, distrusted the reaction, distrusted itself; above all, distrusted the nation. The scattered Parliamentary elections which took place from time to time, as well as the elections to Councils-General and Municipal Councils, seemed to show an increasing desire to give the Republic a fair trial; but, in all such nominations of local representatives, the general question as to the form of government was so mixed up and confused with matters of detail and of special legislation, and was so little before the country as a precise and definite issue, that nothing certain could be deduced from the results obtained. Many said that the only legitimate basis for the Republic, as for any other Government where revolutions have rendered it necessary to rebuild from the foundation, was the *plébiscite*, by which the people themselves are called upon to signify their will on a distinct question, uncomplicated with others. Neither the Administration nor the Assembly would consent to this course; even the extreme Republicans forebore from demanding it, because it was thought to be "Napoleonic." Yet as long as it was withheld, Napoleon had the right to say that it was the Republic which confiscated the national sovereignty.

The aspect of the future was so uncertain that the Assembly thought it prudent, in February, 1872, to make some provision against possible attempts at a revolution or a *coup d'état*. It was accordingly arranged that, in case the Chamber should be dissolved by violence, a provisional Assembly was to be formed through the instrumentality of the Councils-General (the provincial Legislatures of France), which were each to appoint two delegates, who were to join, in any town of France that might be agreed on, such deputies of the dissolved Chamber as might have been able to escape. The necessity for making this provision was a miserable comment on the instability of French institutions; and it was very doubtful if it would serve its purpose, supposing the danger should arise. The Councils-General might meet; but if the revolutionists had the army at their back, they would soon disperse the troublesome objectors. M. Thiers himself had so little confidence in the perpetuity of that form of government which, in a moment of politic enthusiasm, he declared was the one which divided France the least, that, in a message to the Assembly, read on the 13th of September, 1871, previous to the prorogation of that body (which left behind it at Versailles "a committee of twenty-five members, to watch over the course of the Government during the recess"), he expressed himself as if nothing but a Monarchy would ensure the repose and dignity of the nation. "Let us speak in all frankness," he said. "There are at the present moment, for our country, the greatest imaginable interests at stake. We have to settle our present and our future lot, and it is necessary to know whether it is to be in accordance with a past tradition, the glorious tradition of a thousand years, that our country is to be constituted, or whether, abandoning itself to the torrent which in the present day precipitates human society towards an unknown future, it is to put on a new form, and thus peacefully pursue its noble destiny. This country, the object of the passionate attention of the whole universe—is it to be a Republic or a Monarchy? Will it adopt one or the other of those two forms of Government, which at the present time divide all nations? What greater problem was ever placed before a great nation in the terms in which it has now arisen with us? I



M. THIERS IN THE TRIBUNE.



LYING IN STATE OF THE ARCHBISHOP OF PARIS.

ask you the question, gentlemen — is it very astonishing that this problem is for us an exciting one? The greater our sincerity and our patriotism, the more must it necessarily excite us." The message was not well received; and certainly nothing could have been better contrived for exciting party passions on the eve of an adjournment.

The work of the Assembly was at first chiefly of a repressive character. For this it cannot be blamed, though the repression came awkwardly after all the Republican *fanfaronnade* of earlier days. The National Guard was dissolved in 1871—a very necessary measure of protection against anarchy and turbulence. A Bill restricting the liberty of the press was passed in February, 1872; and in the following month it was enacted that any Frenchman joining the International or any similar Society shall be liable to fine and imprisonment, accompanied by deprivation of social and civil rights. The Republic was also busy inquiring into the acts of the Government of the National Defence, into the conduct of the capitulating generals, and into the causes of the Communal insurrection. Of political and social reform, the Republic in its early days knew but little.

The Army Bill which was passed in the early summer of 1872 may be taken as an indication that France was determined to place herself, as far as possible, in a position to recover her old military predominance. By this measure, universal military service was enforced on all men between the ages of twenty and forty, and, except in very special cases, without the option of obtaining substitutes, as under the conscription established by Napoleon I., and existing in France ever since. As a check to possible Buonapartism, the army was not to exercise the franchise—a serious drawback from universal suffrage, considering the large number of men who would at all times be under the colours. The term of service was fixed by the new law at five years. The Assembly was strongly disposed to a shorter term; but M. Thiers insisted on five years at the very least, and, by dint of his favourite threat of resigning, carried his point. He even said that his own preference was for eight years' service; but, by way of compromise, he would be content with five. The effect of the Bill, if rigorously carried out, would be to place France on a perpetual war-footing, and to create in time a weapon by which the defeats of 1870–71 might possibly be avenged. Europe might well look aghast at the apparition of two such armed nations as Germany and France, and doubt whether civilisation and progress were not idle words when the passions of opposing races were roused. The dark anticipations which many observers formed at the conclusion of peace in February, 1871, seemed but too likely to be realised. By a more moderate prosecution of the war, and a more restrained use of victory, the Germans might have prevented that extreme exasperation of the French mind which existed from one end of the country to the other, and which was the origin and support of the Army Bill of 1872. It was thought by most observers in France and in Europe, towards the end of 1872, that the existing peace could hardly be anything else than a truce; and the mind recoiled in horror from the prospect of renewed slaughter and devastation. Some time, however, must necessarily elapse before the French army could be reconstituted, before alliances could be formed, and before French territory could be entirely freed from the German army of occupation, which rendered a renewal of the war additionally hazardous.

The profound ill-will of the French towards the foreign garrison of some of their towns was shown by repeated collisions between the civilians and their temporary German masters. Several cases of assassination of the latter occurred, and French Juries would not convict, while even French Judges were found to talk of patriotic motives in connection with such acts. The Prussians were even compelled to threaten that, unless they could obtain redress for these outrages, they would take the law into their own hands; and at St. Quentin, in July, 1871, the Prussian military commandant, in consequence of some insult to one of his officers, posted up an order of the day, in which he expressed "great satisfaction" that the insulted officer had "wounded the inhabitant sufficiently severely to put him *hors de combat*," and, at the same time, imperatively commanded even private soldiers to "use their sabres," under similar circumstances, "as seriously and vigorously as possible." This outrageous order, however, led to a decree of Count Moltke's, prohibiting military commandants from acting without judicial authority.

The desire of the French to hasten the departure of the Germans, or at least to reduce the area of occupation, was most natural. This was soon to some extent done. At the commencement of August, 1871, M. Pouyer-Quertier, the then Minister of Finance, informed the Assembly that the payment of a milliard of francs to Germany had been completed some days before; that, by the terms of a new convention, the army of occupation would be reduced from 500,000 to 150,000 men; and that the daily expense in future would be "only" 290,000 francs, instead of 1,250,000. In the early autumn an arrangement was completed for the

evacuation of six more departments, on the condition of France making certain commercial concessions to Alsace and German Lorraine; and on the 20th of September—a year and three days since Paris was invested—the Germans evacuated the forts on the right bank of the Seine, and thus left the capital and the adjoining departments entirely free of the invaders. A further step was taken in the summer of 1872. In the sitting of the National Assembly on the 1st of July, M. de Remusat, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, presented and read a Treaty between France and Germany for hastening the payment of the war indemnity, and for the more speedy evacuation of the occupied departments. The consideration of this Treaty having been referred, as usual in such cases, to a committee, the Duc de Broglie, on the 6th of July, presented the report of the committee, which unanimously recommended the adoption of the Bill necessary for making the Treaty law. In the course of his report, the Duke remarked that, out of "the unheard-of indemnity" exacted by Prussia at the peace, nearly two-thirds—that is to say, three milliards—yet remained to be paid, and that, as a guarantee of this debt, six departments, with the arrondissement of Belfort, remained occupied by 50,000 Germans. The three milliards (the report went on to explain) were not payable till March 1st, 1874. But such an immense sum could neither be paid by France nor received by Germany all at once, without occasioning such a displacement of capital as would trouble the commercial equilibrium and disturb the monetary circulation of the whole world; and accordingly the faculty of gradual and partial payment was provided for by Art. 7 of the Treaty of Versailles. The new Convention, in its



THE INVALIDS WAITING FOR THEIR COMRADES.

first article, regulated the exercise of this faculty. By virtue of this article, a first milliard was to be paid by anticipation in two terms before February 1st, 1873; the second was to be due on March 1st, 1874, and payment of the last might be postponed until March 1st, 1875. The last payment, as well as all the others, might, at the convenience of order. No new fortifications were to be erected on them, and those already existing were not to be strengthened. By way of reciprocity, the German Government bound itself to construct no stronghold in the departments the occupation of which was to be prolonged. Moreover, the partial evacuation was not to be followed by a diminution of the



THE COUNT DE CHAMBORD.

France, be anticipated, either wholly, or in instalments of not less than one hundred millions, on giving the German Government a month's notice. Two departments would be evacuated after payment of the first stipulated instalment; two others after the second. Nevertheless, France was not allowed to recover a full and free disposing power over the territories evacuated, since they were to be neutralised in the military sense of the word, and prohibited from receiving more French troops than would be necessary for the maintenance of effective of the foreign troops, who would simply be concentrated in the occupied departments. This stipulation, as the report observed, was a harsh one for the unfortunate localities, which would thus be obliged to bear a burden from which their neighbours were relieved. The Treaty, in fact, offered but little ground for congratulation to the French; yet it was an improvement on the previous situation, and it was adopted without discussion, and with only three or four dissentients.

A greater source of satisfaction to France was to

be found in the unshaken state of her credit, the exhaustless character of her internal wealth, and the extraordinary power of recovery from misfortune which she has again exhibited. In a statement submitted to the Assembly on the 20th of June, 1871, M. Thiers said that the actual burthens imposed on the country by the war were—an increase of the capital of the public debt to the extent of 8,000 millions of francs (or 320,000,000*l.*); the necessity for the imposition of new taxes to meet the interest of that increase to the extent of 436 millions (or 17,500,000*l.*); and a yearly budget in future of 2,500 millions (100,000,000*l.*), including a sinking fund of 200 millions (8,000,000*l.*). To meet the first instalment of the German indemnity, a loan was necessary; and, accordingly, one of eighty millions sterling was contracted, bearing interest (taking the price of issue into account) at six per cent. So successful was this loan that, on the day after the issue, M. Pouyer-Quertier was able to announce to the Assembly that 4,500 millions of francs were subscribed within six hours. In a single day—the 27th of June—5,000 millions of francs were subscribed (the loan was for 2,000 millions), and all the subscriptions of the 28th were refused and nullified.

Another loan, however, was necessary in a little more than a year. On the 8th of July, 1872, M. Goulard, the new Minister of Finance, presented a Bill authorising the Government to contract a loan of three milliards of francs in Rente at five per cent. The price of issue was afterwards fixed at 84 francs 50 centimes, bearing interest from the 16th of August. The minimum subscription was to be five francs, so that it might truly be said that the whole nation was invited to share in the loan. The response to that invitation was truly extraordinary. On the night of the 27th of July, a large crowd of people of the humblest class gathered about the doors of the Treasury, that they might be in time on the following morning to get their subscriptions. The Mairies of Paris, and other places where subscriptions were accepted, were similarly beset. The loan was issued on Sunday, the 28th, and a large amount was instantly taken. Some of the small subscribers at once sold their stock at a considerable premium. M. Goulard, in the sitting of the National Assembly on the 30th of July, stated that the subscriptions to the loan amounted in capital to 41 milliards 641 millions; in Rente, to 2 milliards 464 millions. France had subscribed 1 milliard 37 millions of Rente (viz., Paris, 790,886,000f., and the departments 246,460,000f.). Foreign countries had subscribed 1,426,779,000f. Thus the loan was covered more than twelve times over. Both the French nation and its Government had just occasion to be proud of this most unmistakable testimony to the general reliance on the magnificent resources at their disposal; and, coming in conjunction with a splendid harvest, it did much towards assuring the continued tranquillity of the country. But nothing could be more extraordinary than the proof thus given of the mine of wealth existing in France after all her troubles and losses. There are not so many great capitalists in France as in England; but there is a more equable distribution of competence. The French peasant or small farmer is thrifty; he saves and stores away as much money as he can spare from the necessities of life; and nothing brings out these secret hoards like a popular loan, as the Empire experienced more than once. On the present occasion, the long-cherished stores came out from cupboards, from drawers, from chests, from chimney-nooks, from old stockings, and from the very earth. Owing to this financial vitality, M. Thiers was able to conclude a supplementary treaty in March, 1873, for the more speedy evacuation of the occupied provinces; on September 5th, 1873, the last instalment of the enormous indemnity was paid, and on September 16th, 1873, the last German soldier left the mutilated soil of France.

The history of the long years since then has more than justified the fears expressed in the first edition of this narrative, respecting the ultimate ill effects of the cruel retribution exacted by the victorious German Power from her crushed adversary. These effects have become more and more manifest as one after another of the actors in the tragic drama have passed away. It has not been well with France, which has been dragged down by constant efforts to allay the smart of degradation, and has been torn by factions tending ever more and more towards the Red Republic. On January 9th, 1873, the Emperor Napoleon died at Chislehurst. On May 24th, 1873, M. Thiers resigned the Presidency, to be succeeded by Marshal MacMahon; and in November, 1873, an attempt was made to fuse the Monarchical parties, but this proved abortive through the obstinacy of the Count de Chambord. Even so late as 1874 a motion for the formal recognition of the Republic was defeated in the Assembly; but a year later a similar motion was carried by 546 to 97. The elections of 1876, however, gave a decided victory to the more moderate Republicans, and the ensuing French Ministries were presided over by such men as Dufaure, Jules Simon, and the Duc de Broglie. About this time the German

Government was guilty of the petty malice of refusing to recognise the Paris Exhibition of 1878. M. Thiers died on September 3rd, 1877, and on January 30th, 1879, Marshal MacMahon resigned the Presidency, to be succeeded by Jules Grévy, with M. Gambetta as President of the Chamber; and in June of the same year the hopes of the Bonapartist party were extinguished by the death of the Prince Imperial in a petty skirmish of the British-Zulu War. France now became a disintegrating influence in Europe, refusing to join in the concerted action of the other Powers regarding Montenegro and Greece, and by her shuffling conduct encouraging the revolt in Egypt; while she offended Italy by practically annexing Tunis, and England by her aggressions in Madagascar and elsewhere. Early in 1882, M. Gambetta formed a ministry, but was defeated by a combination of factions in the Chamber, and died in December of the same year. August, 1883, saw the death of the Count de Chambord. The July of 1884 witnessed a violent rupture between Prince Napoleon and his son, the sole surviving line of the Bonaparte family; and the years since then have seen France fretful and irritable, torn by faction in the Assembly, and governed by ministries, each more opposed to legal authority and religion than the preceding. On the other hand, the hatred felt towards Germany has been shown by repeated and dangerous petty conflicts on the frontier; and in September, 1883, the late King Alphonso of Spain was hissed and hooted in the streets of Paris, for no other reason than that he had recently been appointed honorary colonel of a Prussian regiment of Uhlans. More recently Europe has seen President Grévy compelled to resign in disgrace on account of his family connection with gross corruption and venality; and the craving of the nation for a military leader and some hope of "revenge" has been manifested by the extraordinary agitation in favour of General Boulanger.

But Germany herself has not thriven upon the misfortunes of France. The enormous indemnity, far from bringing any benefit to her people, was largely wasted upon the decoration of Berlin; and she has been compelled to support ever since the peace, not only all her former, but additional military burdens, more and more crushing every year. In January, 1872, the Emperor published a manifesto, in which he made the most absolutist monarchical claims, and which produced at the time a very bad impression, though at the time of his death on March 9th, 1888, all was forgotten but his high sense of duty and immense services to his country. The short reign of the Emperor Frederick held out a brief promise of better things, but was terminated by a painful disease on June 15th, 1888; and every opportunity has been taken since to pour contempt on his memory and opinions by the representatives of the now dominant military party, even the young Emperor William not being free from this reproach. The nation has become imperious and overbearing, and even England has had to suffer from unfriendly action in South and Eastern Africa, New Guinea, and elsewhere. Germany's foreign policy has been dictated by the anxious desire to secure alliances against the ever-anticipated revenge of France, and for many years this was sought through a triple alliance between the three Emperors of Germany, Austria, and Russia. On March 13th, 1881, however, the Russian Emperor Alexander was assassinated, and the accession of Alexander III., who only a few months before had been under arrest by his father's orders, introduced a new and disturbing element into European politics. In February, 1872, General Skobeleff made a most violent speech against Germany; and though this General died immediately after, the tension between Germany and Russia has tended to increase, while the autocracy of the North has gravitated towards alliance with the Republic of France. To meet this threatening danger, Prince Bismarck at one time sought to detach and propitiate Russia by assisting her policy against the interests of England and Austria, and at another by strengthening his alliances with Italy, Austria, and England, while adding heavily to the military burdens of Germany herself; but always alike the feeling of danger and insecurity is manifest, and as we write, it may be said with simple truth that all Europe has been living for years in momentary dread of some gigantic explosion, nominally over affairs in the East, but which must rapidly develop far more momentous issues. Europe is one vast armed camp, and it is but too plain that the enormous indemnity and annexation of the French provinces exacted by her, so far from being a benefit to Germany, have cost her their full value over and over again. It is perhaps not to be wished that it should be otherwise, for the success of such a terrible use of power might also prove a precedent of awful import for the peace of the world. But the ultimate issues are still veiled from us of passions and interests aroused by that war, whose origin, progress, and more immediate results have been recorded in these pages.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX.

I.

THE ORIGIN OF THE WAR.

It may be convenient in this place to give some extracts from the Blue Book on the rupture between France and Prussia, which was issued by the British Government towards the end of July, 1870; and otherwise to refer more at large than in the body of the work to various matters preceding the outbreak of war.

On the 8th of July, Lord Lyons, our Ambassador at Paris, reported to his Government that, in an interview with the Duc de Gramont, the French Foreign Minister, he had "expressed some surprise and regret at the rapid pace at which the French Government seemed to be proceeding." When it was found that the renunciation of his candidature by the Prince of Hohenzollern was not accepted by the French Government as a satisfactory solution of the difficulty, Lord Lyons, in a personal interview with M. de Gramont, inquired upon what terms the French Government would consider the matter finally settled. The Foreign Minister took a sheet of paper, and wrote on it a brief memorandum, to the effect that if the King of Prussia would forbid the Prince of Hohenzollern to renew his candidature, the incident would be entirely at an end. To some remarks of Lord Lyons, the Duc de Gramont replied that he "was bound to take precautions against such an occurrence as a renewal of the candidature, and that if the King refused to issue the simple prohibition which was proposed, France could only suppose that designs hostile to her were entertained, and must take her measures accordingly." On the 14th, the British Government recommended the King of Prussia to communicate to France his consent to Prince Leopold's renunciation; but the suggestion was declined. Count Bernstorff said that Prussia had shown, under a public menace from France, a calmness and moderation which would render any further concession on her part equivalent to a submission to the arbitrary will of France, and would be viewed in the light of a humiliation, which the national feeling throughout Germany would certainly repudiate as a fresh insult. On the previous day, Lord A. Loftus, our Ambassador at Berlin, had an interview with Count Bismarck, and congratulated his Excellency on the apparent solution of the impending crisis by the spontaneous renunciation of the Prince of Hohenzollern. Lord A. Loftus, continuing his report to his Government, said:—

"His Excellency appeared somewhat doubtful as to whether this solution would prove a settlement of the difference with France. He told me that the extreme moderation evinced by the King of Prussia under the menacing tone of the French Government, and the courteous reception by his Majesty of Count Benedetti at Ems, after the severe language held to Prussia, both officially and in the French press, was producing throughout Prussia general indignation. He had that morning, he said, received telegrams from Bremen, Königsberg, and other places, expressing strong disapprobation of the conciliatory course pursued by the King of Prussia at Ems, and requiring that the honour of the country should not be sacrificed. Count Bismarck then observed that intelligence had been received from Paris (though not officially from Baron Werther) that the solution of the Spanish difficulty would not suffice to content the French Government, and that other claims would be advanced. If such be the case, said his Excellency, it was evident that the question of the succession to the Spanish throne was but a mere pretext, and that the real object of France was to seek a revenge for Königgrätz. The feeling of the German nation, said his Excellency, was that they were fully equal to cope with France, and they were as confident as the French might be of military success. The feeling, therefore, in Prussia and in Germany was that they should accept no humiliation or insult from France, and that, if unjustly provoked, they should accept the combat. 'But,' said his Excellency, 'we do not wish for war, and we have proved, and shall continue to prove, our peaceful disposition; at the same time, we cannot allow the French

to have the start of us as regards armaments. I have,' said his Excellency, 'positive information that military preparations have been made, and are making, in France for war. Large stores of munitions are being concentrated, large purchases of hay and other materials necessary for a campaign are making, and horses are being collected. If these continue,' said his Excellency, 'we shall be obliged to ask the French Government for explanations as to their object and meaning. After what has now occurred, we must require some assurance, some guarantee, that we may not be subjected to a sudden attack; we must know that, this Spanish difficulty once removed, there are no other lurking designs which may burst upon us like a thunderstorm.' Count Bismarck further stated that, unless some assurance, some declaration, were given by France to the European Powers, or in some official form, that the present solution of the Spanish question was a final and satisfactory settlement of the French demands, and that no further claims were to be raised; and if, further, a withdrawal or a satisfactory explanation of the menacing language held by the Duc de Gramont were not made; the Prussian Government would be obliged to seek explanations from France. It was impossible, added his Excellency, that Prussia could tamely and quietly sit under the affront offered to the King and to the nation by the menacing language of the French Government. 'I could not,' said his Excellency, 'hold communication with the French Ambassador after the language held to Prussia by the French Minister for Foreign Affairs in the face of Europe.'"

On the 15th of July, Lord Granville formally tendered mediation at both courts; but two days earlier, the telegram, detailing a supposed insult to the French Ambassador in Prussia, arrived in Paris. The story of this imagined insult is of a very dark and suspicious nature, and we must temporarily take leave of the Blue Book to narrate it. On the 13th of July, an evening supplement to the official Prussian journal, the *North German Gazette*, was published, and distributed gratis about the streets of Berlin. It contained the following announcement:—

"Telegram addressed by the Prussian Government to Foreign Governments.

"(Translation.)

"After the news of the renunciation of the hereditary Prince of Hohenzollern had been officially communicated to the Imperial French Government by the Royal Spanish Government, the French Ambassador at Ems further demanded of his Majesty the King to authorise him to telegraph to Paris that his Majesty the King engages for all future time never again to give his consent if the Hohenzollerns should return to their candidature. His Majesty the King thereupon declined to receive the French Ambassador again, and had him told by the adjutant in attendance that his Majesty had nothing further to communicate to the Ambassador."

It was Count Bismarck himself who telegraphed this announcement to the representatives of Germany at foreign Courts; and it therefore cannot be wondered at that the French Government should have believed it to be true, or that the French people should have been inflamed with anger at the supposed slight to their Ambassador. The account of the incident, however, had been considerably, and as it would seem wilfully, exaggerated by the Prussian Chancellor, with a view to producing this feeling of exasperation at Paris. The actual facts were afterwards (when it was too late) stated by Count Bismarck in a memorandum drawn up by the King's order, which ran:—

"On the Fountain Promenade, in the morning of the 13th, the King gave the Ambassador an extra Number of the *Cologne Gazette*, which had been just delivered to himself, with a private telegram from Sigmaringen, on the renunciation of the Prince, the King remarking that he himself had not yet received any letter from Sigmaringen, but might expect one to-day. Count Benedetti mentioned that he had received news of the renunciation from Paris the evening before; and as the King thereupon looked upon the matter as settled, the Ambassador now quite unexpectedly required of the King that he should pronounce a distinct assurance that he never again would give his consent if the candidature for the crown in question should be ever revived. The King decidedly refused such a demand, and kept to that decision, though Count Benedetti repeatedly, and always more urgently, returned to his proposition. Nevertheless, after some hours, Count Benedetti sought a third audience. On inquiry what was the subject to be spoken of, he returned answer that he wished to recur to that spoken of in the morning. The King refused a fresh audience on this ground, as he had no other answer than the one given; moreover, that from thenceforward all negotiations were to go on through the Ministries. Count Benedetti's wish to take leave of the King on his departure [from Ems] was acceded to, and he saluted him at the station on the 14th, in passing on a journey to Coblentz."

Returning to the English Blue Book, we find the effect of the original report thus described by Lord Lyons, in a despatch from Paris, dated July 14th:—

"During the early part of the night [of July 13th] the hope that it might yet be possible to preserve peace gained some strength. It was understood that the renunciation of his pretensions by Prince Leopold himself had come to confirm that made on his behalf by his father, and that the Spanish Government had formally declared to the Government of France that the candidature of the Prince was at an end. The language of influential members of the Cabinet was more pacific, and it was thought possible that some conciliatory intelligence might arrive from Prussia, and enable the Government to pronounce the whole question to be at an end.

"But in the morning all was changed. A telegram was received from the French *chargé d'affaires* at Berlin stating that an article had appeared in the Prussian Ministerial organ, the *North German Gazette*, to the effect that the French Ambassador had requested the King to promise never to allow a Hohenzollern to be a candidate for the throne of Spain, and that his Majesty had thereupon refused to receive the Ambassador, and sent him word by an aide-de-camp that he had nothing more to say to him.

"The intelligence of the publication of this article completely changed the view taken by the French Government of the state of the question. The Emperor came into Paris from St. Cloud, and held a council at the Tuileries, and it was considered certain that a declaration hostile to Prussia would be addressed at once by the Government to the Chambers."

The French case, according to Lord Lyons, was thus stated to him by the Duc de Gramont:—

"He desired me to express to her Majesty's Government the thanks of the Government of the Emperor for the friendly endeavours which they had made to effect a satisfactory solution of the question with Prussia. The good offices of her Majesty's Government had, however, been made of no effect by the last acts of the Prussian Government. That Government had deliberately insulted France by declaring to the public that the King had affronted the French Ambassador. It was evidently the intention of the Government of Prussia to take credit with the people of Germany for having acted with haughtiness and discourtesy—in fact, to humiliate France. Not only had the statement so offensive to France been published by the Government in its newspaper, but it had been communicated officially by telegraph to the Prussian agents throughout Europe.

"Until this had been done, the negotiation had been particularly private. It had, from the peculiar circumstances of the case, been carried on directly with the King of Prussia. The Prussian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Count Bismarck, had been in the country, and it had been impossible to approach him. The acting Minister, M. de Thiele, professed to know nothing of the subject, and to consider it as a matter concerning, not the Prussian Government, but the King personally. Although the distinction was not in principle admissible, still it obliged France to treat with the King directly, and the French Ambassador had been sent to wait upon his Majesty at Ems. The negotiation had not proceeded satisfactorily; but so long as it remained private there were hopes of bringing it to a satisfactory conclusion. Nor, indeed, had the King really treated M. Benedetti with the rough discourtesy which had been boasted of by the Prussian Government. But that Government had now chosen to declare to Germany and to Europe that France had been affronted in the person of her Ambassador. It was this boast which was the *gravamen* of the offence. It constituted an insult which no nation of any spirit could brook, and rendered it, much to the regret of the French Government, impossible to take into consideration the mode of settling the original matter in dispute which was recommended by her Majesty's Government."

The statement of Count Bismarck alleged:—

"For a week past it could be no matter of doubt to us that the Emperor Napoleon was resolved, regardless of consequences, to bring us into a position in which we should only have the choice between war and a humiliation which the honourable feelings of no nation can bear. Could we have entertained any doubt, we must have been undeceived by the report of the Royal Ambassador on his first conference with the Duc de Gramont and M. Ollivier, after his return from Ems, in which the first described the renunciation of the hereditary Prince as a secondary matter, and both Ministers demanded that his Majesty the King should write an apologetic letter to the Emperor Napoleon, the publication of which might pacify the excited feeling in France."

Thus we see that the two nations went to war because each thought the other was endeavouring to insult and humiliate it.

In the autumn of 1871, M. Benedetti published a work on the origin of the war, under the title of "My Mission in Prussia," in the course of which he states that there was no want of courtesy at Ems on either side. On the 7th of July (says a summary of the more important parts of this work, given in the *Daily News*) M. Benedetti was at Wildbad, when he received orders from Paris to go at once to Ems, where instructions would await him. Those instructions, signed by the Duc de Gramont, he prints at length. Prince Leopold had accepted the position of candidate for the Crown of Spain. The King of Prussia had professed, said the despatch, that he was altogether indifferent to the fact. "In that case," said the Duke, "we beg of him to be so no longer, but to interfere, if not by order, at least by counsels, to prevent the further progress of the design." In a private letter of the same date (July 7th) M. de Gramont said—"You must really get a downright answer from the King, and this is what alone will satisfy us:—'The King's Government does not approve of the acceptance signified by Prince Leopold, and orders him to withdraw it, as given without the King's permission.'" He wrote in the same letter:—"We cannot be put off, for, in case of a non-satisfactory reply next Saturday, movements must begin to enable the army to take the field within a fortnight. Get the King to revoke his permission, and it will be an immense service; if not, it will be war. But no ambiguities, no delays." On the day after his arrival, M. Benedetti was received by the King, and dined with him. In a long con



THE BRANDENBURG GATE, BERLIN.

versation, the King said he had given his consent to Prince Leopold's candidature, but only as head of the family, not as a Sovereign, and his Government had had nothing to say in the matter. The negotiations on the subject had been confined to the Spanish Government and the Prince. M. Benedetti urged that the public would never be brought to understand this distinction, and pressed easily obtained the promise that as soon as the King received Prince Antoine's reply he would see him again. In the course of the conversation, the King spoke warmly respecting the language held by the Duc de Gramont in the Assembly, which he said was very like a provocation to Prussia.

On the 10th, M. Benedetti did not see the King until late in the evening; but on that day M. de



GENÉRAL FELIX DOUAY.

the King much to consider the state of public feeling in France, and the ease with which he might render a priceless service to the cause of peace; but his Majesty was immovable, maintaining that the Prince's resolution in no wise affected the honour of France. At last, however, he said he had written to the Prince's father, Prince Antoine, and had asked him whether his son had considered the excitement that was existing in France on the subject, adding that he expected to hear from him on the subject. M. Benedetti Gramont telegraphed, "We cannot wait; we must have an answer before the day is over. Our preparations must begin. We cannot let Prussia get first." Later in the same day he telegraphed, "Let me have a despatch which I can read to the Chamber. Tell us that the King knew of and authorised the Prince's acceptance, and that he now asks for time to confer with the Prince before making known his further resolutions." M. Benedetti sent off on that day a caution to Paris: war, he said, would become inevitable if military pre-

parations were commenced with ostentation. In the evening he saw the King, and told him that the French Government could not possibly put off its explanations in the Assembly. The King said he had not heard from Prince Leopold, but would receive M. Benedetti in the morning. On the 10th, the Duc de Gramont wrote to M. Benedetti a private letter, in which he said:—"We really cannot allow our adversaries to get before us to-day as they got before Austria in 1866. Besides, I tell you frankly, public opinion is vehemently excited, and threatens to take the control of affairs out of our hands. We must begin, and we shall not wait longer than until the arrival of your despatch to call in the 300,000 men who are liable. I beg you earnestly to telegraph to me something clear and decisive. If the King will not counsel the Prince of Hohenzollern to give way—well, there is nothing for it but war, and in a few days we shall be on the Rhine." On the 11th, M. Benedetti obtained another audience of the King, which lasted an hour. The King asked the French Minister to telegraph to Paris, and say that he expected an answer from Prince Leopold that evening or next day, and would see M. Benedetti immediately upon its arrival. In the course of the conversation, the King said, "I am not so ignorant as you may suppose of the preparations your people are making in Paris, and I tell you frankly that I on my side am taking care not to be surprised." He afterwards said that he trusted peace would be maintained, and that it would be, if at Paris they would only wait the short time that would be necessary to enable him to contribute to that result. M. Benedetti explained to his Government that the King's anxiety seemed to be that he should not stand before Germany as having any responsibility in the matter of Prince Leopold's candidature, but should let the withdrawal be entirely the Prince's act. On the 11th, M. de Gramont telegraphed to M. Benedetti that the latter was not speaking with sufficient firmness, and that his language did not correspond to the position taken by the Emperor's Government. The King's distinction between himself and his Government must be rejected; the King must positively forbid the Prince to persist in his candidature, and either silence or ambiguity on his part would be taken to signify a refusal. On the 12th, M. de Gramont sent two telegrams: in the first he consented to wait a day for the King's answer; in the second, marked "very confidential," he said:—"Employ all your skill to be able to inform us that the renunciation of the Prince has been announced, communicated, or transmitted to you by the King of Prussia or his Government. This is a matter of the highest importance. The participation of the King must come out as a fact, in some way or other, at any price." On the evening of the 12th it was known at Paris that the Prince had withdrawn his candidature, and on the 13th M. Benedetti telegraphed to his Government:—"The King has received the response of the Prince of Hohenzollern, who announces that his son withdraws from his candidature. His Majesty authorises me to say that he approves of this resolution." M. Benedetti says he considers that the object contemplated in his instructions was thus gained, and that France had received the satisfaction she required. But he points to the language of the Paris press and the Assembly, which denounced this success as a ridiculous triumph; and to the pressure of public opinion he traces the necessity under which the Emperor's Government was placed of urging wholly new and, in themselves, excessive demands.

The German Government published some statements with reference to this work of M. Benedetti's, and alluded more particularly to the alleged proposal of France for annexing Belgium. In August, 1866, France had made a demand for Mayence; but, on Prussia peremptorily refusing, the suggestion was withdrawn, and, ten days later, M. Benedetti received a despatch from Paris, in which he was instructed to demand of Prussia a public and avowed treaty, giving France Luxemburg, and a secret treaty stipulating for an alliance, "offensive and defensive, for the purpose of allowing France to annex Belgium at the moment she should think to be opportune, with a promise of help, even by arms, if need were, on the part of Prussia." Count Benedetti, according to the German statement, drafted a copy of the treaty, which copy, it was added, was in the hands of the German Foreign Office, with marginal annotations made at Paris. Germany, we are told, played with the offer, and then rejected it. This is the treaty which, it will be recollected, the French Government, at the outbreak of the war, said had been originated by Bismarck, drafted by Count Benedetti at the Prussian Minister's request, and rejected by France. We have not heard the whole truth with regard to this negotiation; but the character of Prussian diplomacy is such as to throw great doubt on the motives of Count Bismarck in connection with the business. That Bismarck and the Emperor Napoleon talked over various matters at Biarritz, shortly before the Austro-Prussian war, is well known; and the Count may afterwards have acted the part of tempter, in accordance with what he supposed to be the Emperor's desires.

II.

INCIDENTS PREVIOUS TO THE DECLARATION OF WAR.

A COLLECTION of despatches and other documents found at St. Cloud by the Germans, and extending from the 29th of June to the 28th of July, 1870, was published at Berlin in November of the same year. As early as the 29th of June (according to these documents), the Minister of Marine was inquiring as to the stores of clothing available for a campaign in the north. On the 6th of July, the date of the Duc de Gramont's memorable declaration, Count Persigny cordially congratulated the Emperor, remarking—"All France will follow you; the enthusiasm is unanimous;" while M. Ollivier informed him that the declaration had been received with immense applause. "Even the Left," he wrote, "with the exception of a very small number, affirmed that it would support the Government. The excitement at the first moment even outstripped its goal. People would have said it was a declaration of war. I took advantage of a declaration by Crémieux to explain the position. I did not admit that we should be represented as meditating war; we only desire peace with honour. The sensation is also great among the public; but that sensation is noble and patriotic. There is heart in this people." On the 8th of July, the Government sent orders for an intelligent man to be despatched to Rastadt to see what the Baden Custom-house officers on the Rhine were doing. On the 15th, the Prefect of Perpignan reported that war was ardently desired by the whole population, even the Republicans predicting the commencement of hostilities in a week, and that the soldiers would celebrate the Napoleon Fête (August 15th) at Berlin. "Nobody," he said, "doubts the favourable issue of the war; there is confidence everywhere, alike in the towns and in the smallest villages." On the 16th of July, the Prefect of Marseilles reported a great torchlight demonstration of 15,000 persons, and cries of "Down with Prussia!" "To Berlin!" the crowd being electrified. On the 17th, the Empress wrote to her mother, the Countess Montijo, at Madrid:—"Louis will set out in a few days with his father for the army. I wish you to send him your blessing before his departure. Do not be anxious. I am perfectly calm. He must do his duty, and honour his name." On the 18th, the Prefect of the Lille reported that the Belgian army, massed on the frontier, was full of ardour, and anxious to cross swords with the Prussians, whom they detested, and that travellers from Hanover stated that a rising there (in favour of the ex-King) was imminent. On the same day, the Prefect of Strasburg applied for 160*l.* for spies on both sides of the Rhine. On the 20th, a General at Châlons sent word that numerous Hanoverians wished to enlist in the army, to go to the Rhine, and not into Africa; and a telegram was sent from Munich that the patriotic (Ultramontane) party in the Bavarian Chambers were determined not to vote a farthing for the mobilisation of the army, which had been ordered in favour of Prussia. On the 21st, the following despatch was sent from Metz to the *Gaulois*:—"Calling out of the Landwehr difficult; conscripts weep; great fear of the French, especially of the Turcos; they are carried off by force in wagons."

The determination of the French Government to declare war was preceded (if we may rely on a German account) by a remarkable scene at a Cabinet Council. It is stated that when the news of the Prince of Hohenzollern's renunciation arrived in Paris, the Ministers met at the Tuileries, and the majority of the Cabinet were in favour of taking a conciliatory course. The Emperor had remained silent, and he now rose, and retired to a little distance. Most of the Ministers also went into the ante-room, to talk unconstrainedly. Three, however, stayed behind—viz., Segris, Maurice Richard, and Lebœuf. The last-named (the Minister of War, and afterwards the chief adviser of the Emperor in the conduct of the campaign) was greatly excited at the disposition of the majority of the Cabinet to accept the renunciation of the Prince of Hohenzollern as a settlement of the question. The Minister of Fine Arts stepped up to him, and said, "Pray compose yourself, Marshal; we have to do with the first military Power of Europe. Are we quite prepared?" "Are we prepared!" echoed Lebœuf, jumping up like a tiger; "prepared as France has never been, and never will be again. Believe me, my dear colleague, if my respect for the Emperor did not restrain me, I would not hold office an hour longer." At this point, the Emperor and the other Ministers returned. Napoleon seemed more excited than was his wont, and remarked that guarantees for the future must be demanded from Prussia. An hour later, it was decided that a *casus belli* should be made of this demand. Such is the account given by the German writer; but its accuracy cannot be absolutely relied on. It has been stated (see Vol. I., p. 195), that the Emperor voted against going to war, but found only one supporter.

III.

IMPERIAL CORRESPONDENCE IN THE EARLY DAYS OF THE WAR.

AMONG the papers found by the Government of September 4th at the Tuileries, and published by them, are some having reference to the Emperor's movements and intentions during the first disasters of the war. The following outline of a letter from the Emperor to Marshal MacMahon was found in the handwriting of M. Rouher :—

"Marshal,—Our communications with Marshal Bazaine are interrupted; the situation is becoming difficult and serious. I call upon your patriotism and devotion, and confer upon you the command of the Army of Châlons, and of the troops which will assemble around the capital and in Paris. You will have the great glory of combating and repulsing foreign invasion. As to myself, no political consideration will be placed above the safety of the country. I will be your first soldier—conquer or die at your side in the midst of my soldiery."

"First form of Proclamation by Marshal MacMahon.

"Imperial Head-quarters, ... 1870.

"Soldiers,—The Emperor has confided to me the command of all the forces, which, with the army at Châlons, are about to assemble round the capital. My most ardent desire would have been to go to the help of Marshal Bazaine; but, after close examination, I am convinced this enterprise is impossible under present circumstances. We could not reach Metz for several days, and before that time Marshal Bazaine will have broken through the obstacles which detain him. Our direct march upon Metz would only . . . During our march towards the east, Paris would be uncovered, and a large Prussian army might arrive under the walls. After the reverses Prussia suffered under the First Empire, she has formed a military organisation enabling her to arm her people rapidly, and within a few days place her entire population under arms. Prussia has therefore a considerable force at her disposal. The fortifications of Paris will stop the flood of the enemy, and give us time to organise the military forces of the country. The national ardour is immense, and I am convinced that, with perseverance, we shall conquer the enemy, and drive him from our territory."

A second proclamation of Marshal MacMahon was in the handwriting of M. Rouher. The Emperor proposed to send to the Marshal a personal letter, and the proclamation which he should address to his soldiers. This second proclamation, like the former, expressed MacMahon's desire to rejoin Bazaine, and the expectation that Bazaine would break through the obstacles opposing him. It then went on to say:—

"The Prussian system consists in concentrating their forces and attacking in large numbers; we must therefore imitate their tactics. I shall conduct you under the walls of Paris, which form the Boulevard of Paris. In a few days the army at Châlons will be doubled. The soldiers of 25 and 35 will rejoin from all parts. I count on your patriotism and valour. I entertain the hope of conquering, and I am convinced that with perseverance and time we shall defeat and drive the enemy from our territory."

IV.

PROCLAMATION OF THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON FROM METZ.

THE Emperor Napoleon addressed the following proclamation to his army from Metz, on the 13th of August, 1870—the day before he quitted that city on his way to the camp at Châlons :—

"Soldiers!—To-morrow will be the 14th of August, the anniversary of your triumphant return to Paris after that glorious campaign which decided the destiny of Austrian domination in Italy. On that day, as after your Crimean victories, all France welcomed you with enthusiasm, and Europe, dazzled, saluted you as worthy sons of the grand armies of the First Empire. To-day, however, Prussia dares to invade the sacred soil of the country. She launches against you a torrent of men, who have surprised your valour, and for the moment triumph over your indomitable courage. Let us march again to encounter them. Soldiers! at Jena, against these same Prussians, so arrogant to-day, your fathers fought as one to three; again at Montmirail, one to six. Is any among you inflamed by that exciting memory, let him set an example to all Frenchmen. The Saxons, the Würtembergers, the soldiers of the Rhenish ex-Confederation, groan at being compelled to lend their arms to the cause of Prussia. They know what little respect that Power has for the rights of peoples. After absorbing millions of Hanoverians, Danes, and Germans, she will not hesitate to absorb the remains of Southern Germany. Insensates! a moment of prosperity blinds them. The oppression or humiliation of Frenchmen belongs not to them. May they have entered France only to find their graves! Soldiers, we shall have to deliver fierce and bloody battles; but with energy and patriotism the country's honour will be safe. For every Frenchman with a heart, the moment has arrived to conquer or die."

V.

GENERAL TROCHU ON THE WAR AND THE REVOLUTION.

A VERY interesting and important speech on the early days of the war, the revolution of September 4th, 1870, and the defence of Paris, was delivered in the National Assembly on the 13th and 14th of June, 1871, by General Trochu. After severely criticising the rashness of the Imperial Government in going to war with an army quite unprepared to encounter the trained hosts of Germany, the general glanced at the disastrous defeats of Weissenburg, Reichshofen, and Forbach, and went on to say that, foreseeing the speedy siege of Paris, he addressed a communication to the Emperor, calling attention to the necessity of providing for the safety of the capital; pointing out that dangers of a special character might explode there at any time, and call into play passions of the most violent kind; and insisting that, when the enemy drew near Paris, it would be necessary to the defence to have an army of relief outside the walls as well as inside. The speaker then continued :—

"That letter was dated the 10th of August. It was read at the conference of generals at which the Emperor was present, and was unanimously approved. Orders had even been given for the army of Metz to fall back, when advices from Paris intimated that its retreat would be attended with serious political dangers, and the army of Metz remained in the position where it was subsequently to perish. I enter into these details to make you comprehend that the idea of standing a siege in Paris was grounded on the existence of an army of relief—that that army was the army of Marshal Bazaine (150,000 trained soldiers), which the army under Marshal MacMahon would have joined. This would have given us an army of 250,000 men around Paris, which would have been their principal *point d'appui*. Under such conditions Paris could never have been invested, and might have held the enemy at bay for an indefinite period, and probably have saved France. What I wanted, moreover, to make clear, was, that for want of that army the defence of Paris was gravely compromised. I received from the War Office orders to take the command of the 12th Corps, which was being organised at the Camp at Châlons out of the Marine Infantry, provisional regiments, and Parisian Mobiles. I arrived at the Châlons railway station on the evening of August 16th; at the very same time, the Imperial train entered the railway station, coming from Metz. The officers who accompanied the Emperor informed me that the safety of the Imperial train had been endangered by the enemy's columns between Metz and Verdun. Thus, at that time, the turning movement on the part of the Prussians, which I foresaw and dreaded, was nearly completed. On the following day (August 17th) the Emperor summoned the generals to a conference, at which I attended; and here begins an unknown chapter in the history of the siege of Paris. It may be necessary to say that I will not mention a single fact for which I have not living witnesses or written proofs. There were present at that conference the Emperor, Prince Napoleon, Marshal MacMahon, General Bertault (in command of the Mobiles of the Seine), General Schmitz (Chief of the Staff of the 12th Corps), and myself. I think that, while the conference was in progress, General de Courson (Prefect of the Palace) came into the room, and remained. The Emperor asked this little council of war what they thought of the state of affairs, and what was the best thing to be done. Unanimously, and through the channel of Prince Napoleon (who spoke first with the greatest firmness), and also through me, the council expressed itself in the following textual terms :—

"'The Emperor has abandoned the Government by going to take the command of the army at such a distance; his Majesty has just abandoned the command of the army, and given it up to Marshal Bazaine. He is alone at the Camp of Châlons without any army; *de facto*, he has abdicated both the Government and the command. Unless his Majesty wishes to abdicate altogether, he is bound to resume either the Government or the command of the army.'

"His Majesty acknowledged that this statement was in conformity with facts. The council added that it did not think it possible for the Emperor to resume the command of the army, and therefore that the only course was to resume with a firm hand the reins of Government. This view met with the Emperor's approbation. Prince Napoleon added, that in order that the Emperor should resume the reins of power in safety, his intention should be notified to the Parisian population by a general officer, who should precede him, and take military and moral precautions to prepare the public for his Majesty's arrival. Turning towards me, the Emperor asked me if I would undertake that mission. I replied :—'Sire,—In the situation, so full of peril, in which the country finds itself, a revolution would hurl it into the abyss. All that can be done to avoid a revolution I will do. You ask me to go to Paris to announce your arrival, and to take the command in chief. I will do all that, but on the clear understanding that the army of Marshal MacMahon will become the army of relief for Paris, for we are sure to be besieged.' The Emperor acquiesced. Marshal MacMahon had previously declared that that was precisely the duty his army had to fulfil. The conference broke up at half-past eleven, after agreeing to a kind of convention, couched in these terms :—

"'General Trochu, appointed Governor of Paris and Commander-in-Chief, will immediately start for Paris; he will precede the Emperor by a few hours. Marshal MacMahon will march on Paris with his army.'

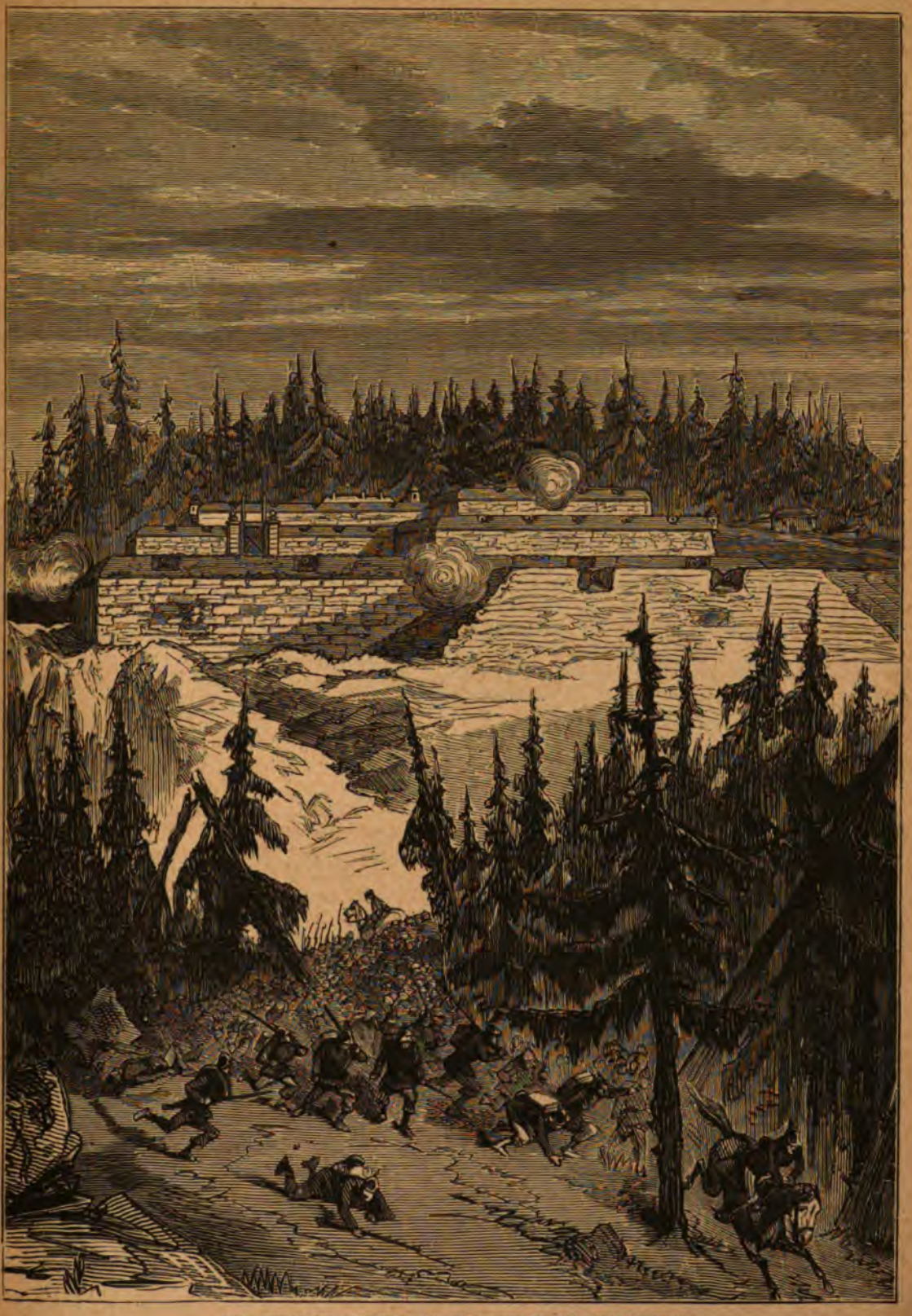
I also received the following order:—

"Camp of Châlons, Aug. 17, 1870.

"'My dear General,—I appoint you Governor of Paris and Commander-in-Chief of all the forces entrusted with the defence of the capital. Immediately on my arrival at Paris, you will receive communication of the decree officially conferring these functions upon you; but in the meanwhile take all the measures that may be necessary to fulfil your mission.—Receive, my dear General, the assurance of my friendly feelings.

"'NAPOLEON.'

That night, gentlemen—the night from the 17th to the 18th of August—I arrived at the Tuileries, and waited on the Empress Regent. I found her full of firmness, full of courage, but excited, and distrusting me. 'General,' said her Majesty—I quote her words textually—'only the Emperor's enemies could have urged on him this return to Paris. He would not reach the Tuileries alive.' 'Madam,' I replied, 'am I, then, one of the Emperor's enemies? I, Prince Napoleon, Marshal MacMahon, and all the generals who took part in the conference at Châlons, united in inducing the return of the Emperor as an act of firmness and manhood, calculated to prevent a revolution. I have accepted the mission, full of danger for myself, and which certainly I was not enabled to foresee, of coming here, and notifying the Emperor's return to the population of Paris. The army of Marshal MacMahon is marching on the capital, and a Government of Defence is about to be formed, to save the country in the frightful crisis in which it finds itself.' 'No, general, the Emperor shall not come to Paris; he will remain at Châlons.' 'But then, Madam, the convention in virtue of which I have come here is worthless. The Emperor sends me here to defend him, and he does not follow me!' 'You will defend Paris; fulfil your mission without the Emperor.' And, in fact, gentlemen, I had long felt an ardent desire to defend Paris. I was determined to shrink from no sacrifice to do so. I therefore replied, 'Madam, very well. I will defend Paris without the Emperor. I have brought with me the proclamation in which I desire to make known to the population that I have been appointed Governor and Commander-in-Chief during the siege. That proclamation begins thus:—"In presence of the peril that threatens the country, the Emperor has appointed me Governor of the capital in a state of siege."' The Empress here interrupted me. 'General, the Emperor's name must not appear in a proclamation at a time like this.' 'But, Madam, I represent the Emperor. I said that I had come here to defend him. I cannot address the population of Paris without referring to the Emperor, and saying that it is by his orders I have undertaken the defence of the capital.' 'No, general. Believe me. In the present state of the public mind there would be serious objections to allowing this reference to the Emperor.' Thereupon it was struck out. Gentlemen, this fact is very important for me. It proves that I was faithfully discharging the trust committed to me, although its main condition had not been kept. It also proves that among the Emperor's servants I was one of the last who wished his name to be mentioned in public documents. I waited on the Minister of War; he received me badly. He told me that he enjoyed a popularity and influence in the Corps Législatif which enabled him to encounter successfully the difficulties of these trying times; and that I should do more harm than good. I replied that I was performing an act of devotion and sacrifice; that I did so because I had been requested to do so; that I was firmly resolved loyally to fulfil my mission to the end; and that that mission consisted in defending Paris, which could be done, as the place was about to be supported by the army of Marshal MacMahon. The Minister was very angry at this. He said that the army of Marshal MacMahon was not coming to Paris; that, on the contrary, from Paris and from every other point in France reinforcements in men and material would be despatched to the scene of operations, and would rescue the army from its danger. I opposed this resolution with all the energy I could command. I told the Minister that whatever was sent to the scene of operations, men or material, would be engulfed in one common ruin; that under present circumstances Paris was the real centre of the national defence, and that it was there that all the available forces should be concentrated. I parted from the Minister of War in a state of profound dissent from his views—a feeling which greatly increased as time wore on. It is requisite to say that I do not in any way, directly or indirectly, impugn the intentions of Count Palikao: he was deeply imbued with his views; I was equally convinced of the soundness of mine. We did not agree. The council of the Empress consisted of the Ministers of the Privy Council, of the President of the Corps Législatif, and of the President of the Senate. I experienced at its hands great and growing distrust; my loyalty, my sincerity, were insufficient to disarm those who showed me so plainly their feelings. One day I was asked how I meant, in the event of an insurrection, to defend the Corps Législatif and the Tuileries. I replied, 'The Empire's fate is at the mercy of another military disaster. If that disaster occurs, do not suppose that, having lost a fourth battle in the field, you can possibly win one in Paris. You must by moral force prevent a conflict. What moral influence I possess, I tender to the Government; it cannot rely on the support of bayonets. I entreat you to believe me, and let me by purely moral means remove the possibility of a conflict. Moreover, you have no garrison.' And, in fact, the 14th Corps, which formed the garrison of Paris, had just been sent off to the seat of war, and there only remained in Paris the 13th Corps in course of formation, and which was literally being improvised. This explicit declaration on my part was the cause of my being in great disgrace. The Presidents of the Senate and Corps Législatif, and the Empress after them, viewed this declaration as a justification of their distrust. They said I did not want to fight; that under present circumstances it was quite possible to defend the Tuileries and the Assembly. I replied that I would



THE GERMANS CHECKED IN THE ATTACK ON PHALSBOURG.

not omit any military measure to do so, but that it was not to be expected that the troops in Paris, quite as much unhinged as the population by the news from the seat of war, could be relied on to fight. And that, gentlemen, was the truth. The same thing always recurs under the same circumstances. You yourselves had proof of it on the 18th of March. From that time I was no longer summoned to the council board. I also became conscious that the War Office entirely ceased having any communication with me. One day I heard that the War Office had ordered the execution of a Prussian spy without communicating with me, who, as Governor, was responsible for all that took place appertaining to military justice. I went to the council, and said that if the orders of the Minister passed over my head I should be forced to resign. The council appeared to side with me, whereupon Count Palikao rose, tendered his resignation, and walked out of the room. It required great efforts on the part of the Empress to restore the Minister's equanimity. On the 3rd of September, other circumstances convinced me afresh that the War Office had virtually superseded me; so much so that I had to ask for information as to the advance of the Prussians, which I derived only from the newspapers. At that period I spent the whole of my time at the various forts, the rapid approach of the enemy rendering our position extremely critical. On the evening of the 3rd, as I was returning from the southern forts on horseback, a general officer stopped me, and said:—'A great disaster at Sedan; the news came this afternoon; the agitation is at its height.' I hastened to the Louvre, where my officers were awaiting my return. I had orders to give to prevent the possible results of this not unforeseen crisis. There, gentlemen, I found a document, which I may say I providentially received, for I was not absolutely entitled to have it written to me. I am indebted for it to the straightforwardness of General Soumain, and, but for his official communication, I should have no proof of what I am about to say but my own unsupported assertions. The letter is an official one; it was lying on my desk, and it proves that, as I had long suspected, I had been completely deprived of the command of the Army of Paris, which was effectually directed by the Minister of War. The letter runs thus:—

"'General,—The Minister of War has just sent me a letter in which, in anticipation of disorderly manifestations in Paris this evening, he orders me to take immediately the necessary measures to repress any attempt at a disturbance. I hasten to have the honour to inform you thereof' (mark, gentlemen, it is my subordinate who informs me) 'by letting you know that in each of the barracks there is a battalion ready to march; the two battalions of foot and two squadrons of horse gendarmes are also to hold themselves in readiness. I have no news from the Prefect of the Seine, to whom I have just sent an officer to gather intelligence as to what is going on. The battalion on duty at the Corps Législatif has been kept there, and has received rations through the agency of M. Schneider. General Melinet' (who was at the Tuileries without my knowledge), 'and the general commanding the 14th Corps, have been informed of the arrangements I have made.'

I never mentioned this letter to General Soumain. I was very far from supposing that I should ever be charged with not having taken all the measures requisite to protect the Assembly; much more that I had made arrangements that it should be left without defence. I read this letter out; my officers viewed it just as I did, and urged me to resign immediately. It proves that I inspired no confidence, and that, both as regards the troops and the National Guard, orders were given entirely behind my back. In the morning I went to the Tuileries. I saw the Empress-Regent, surrounded by many anxious persons. She herself was perfectly calm. I addressed to her these few words:—'Madam. an hour of great danger has arrived. Strange things are taking place here, but this is not a time for recrimination. I remain at my post; but be assured that the crisis is a serious one, and what I said at the council the other day will prove strictly true.' I received neither from the War Office nor the Tuileries any order, news, or notice of any kind. About one o'clock in the afternoon I saw General Lebreton, the quæstor of the Corps Législatif. I see him here, and he can correct me if my memory proves deceitful. He told me, 'General, the peril is at its height. There is a tremendous crowd on the quay about to break into the house; the troops have allowed the mob to break through their lines. You alone, by a personal effort, may perhaps stave the danger off.' I replied, 'General, I am the victim of an unprecedented situation. In fact, I have no command; I did not order the troops you mention to be posted where they were.' Here, gentlemen, I beg to say that I am thoroughly convinced that if I had been in command the case would have been precisely the same. I mean to say that I was the victim of a combination, which has given rise to the abominable rumours that have been in circulation about me, and which I should scorn to notice save before my real judges—that is, this Assembly. But to proceed. I told General Lebreton, 'You want me single-handed to stop the advance of half a million of men, who are surging up towards the Assembly, and yet you must know as well as I do that it cannot be done; but, as you make this demand in the name of the Corps Législatif, I will hazard the attempt, though I am well assured of its failure.' Ten minutes later I was on horseback, and on my way to the Corps Législatif. At the same moment I despatched General Schmitz to the Tuileries to inform the Empress of what I was going to do. I was accompanied by two aides de camp, and had no difficulty in getting through the Carrousel, though the place was crowded, because nobody seemed to want to penetrate into the Tuileries; but when I got to the quay, I had great difficulty in moving through the huge mass, which stretched from a long way beyond the Pont Neuf, far up the Champs Elysées. I witnessed, not without fear or emotion, such a sight as I had never beheld, although I had

seen both 1830 and 1848. An immense multitude of men, women, and children, wholly unarmed, and in whom kindliness, fear, anger, and good-nature were oddly mingled, surged up all around me, and wholly prevented my advance. . . . . It took me nearly an hour to get to the corner of the Pont de Solferino. There I was compelled to come to a standstill. I had long since lost my two aides de camp, and could neither go forward nor back. I kept parleying with the crowd, trying to get them to open a way for me, when a tall man elbowed himself up. I did not know him—he was under the influence of great emotion. He said, 'General, where are you going?' 'I am going to try and save the Corps Législatif.' 'The Corps Législatif has been invaded. I was there—I saw it. I give you my word it is so. I am M. Jules Favre.' M. Jules Favre added, 'That is the culminating disaster. Here is a revolution being consummated in the midst of the disasters of our armies. You may be sure that the demagogues who are going to try and turn it to account will give France her death-blow if we don't prevent it. I am going to the Hôtel de Ville : that is the rendezvous of the men who wish to save the country.' I replied, 'Monsieur, I cannot take such a resolution at present ;' and we parted. It took me about an hour longer to get back to the Louvre. Whilst these events were taking place, the Empress had left the Tuileries. General Schmitz had found her gone, and had been received by Admiral Jurien de la Gravière, who had remained at the Palace. The official historiographers, whose narratives I have read, generally add—'The principal functionaries of the State crowded round the Empress to take leave of her : General Trochu alone did not appear.' No, I did not appear, because at that time, instead of paying compliments of condolence to the Empress, I was making an attempt personally to protect the Corps Législatif, at the request of General Lebreton. A little after my return to the Louvre, a group of persons, utterly unknown to me, presented themselves. The person who led them said, 'I am M. Steenackers, a deputy. I am sent to you with these gentlemen, to tell you that a real drama is being enacted at the Hôtel de Ville. It is surrounded by the mob. Deputies have met there to form a Provisional Government. But there are no troops ; there are no soldiers ; there are no means of enforcing any decision that may be arrived at ; they imagine that your name will be a kind of sanction, and that the troops dispersed all over Paris would rally round you.' I asked for five minutes to see my family, and went to the Hôtel de Ville. What I saw there was striking enough. There were the same enormous crowds as during the morning, but very much more mixed. Shouts, clamours, and threats arose on every side. The Hôtel de Ville itself was filled with so dense a mob that it was only by devious ways that I was able to reach a closet, about four times the size of this tribune, in which the Provisional Government had stationed itself by the light of a solitary lamp. I did not know whether the men I saw there for the first time (with the exception of M. Jules Favre, whom I had seen during the day) were really usurpers—vultures soaring down on power as a prey ; but they did not look like it. I felt that they and I were exposed to a great peril. One of them said, 'General, in this formidable crisis we are especially anxious that the Government should not fall into the hands of the people in the next room. Just now, taken aback by the suddenness of events, they are not armed ; but they will be to-morrow. If you will consent to be the Minister of War of the Provisional Government, the officers and soldiers in Paris will gather round your name, and there will be some means of enforcing the measures that must be taken for the preservation of order in Paris.' I replied, 'Before making up my mind, it is my duty to go to the War Office, and acquaint the Minister, who is my chief, of what is going on here.' I went, and found Count Palikao in his office, a prey to intense grief; he thought that his son, a clever young officer, had been killed at Sedan. On this occasion he received me with the greatest cordiality. 'General,' he said, 'the revolution is an accomplished fact. If you don't take the direction of affairs, it is all over with us ; if you do, probably the result will be just the same ; but the soldiers will rally round you.' I returned to the Hôtel de Ville, where I found that the Provisional Government had received during my absence an addition to its numbers in the person of M. Rochefort. I told the Provisional Government, 'If you want me to be of any use at this fearful crisis, I must be at the head of affairs. M. Jules Favre is President—I must be President in his place.' Such, gentlemen, in a very condensed form, is the history of September 4th."

The remaining portion of General Trochu's speech, referring to his defence of Paris, has been noticed in the body of this work.

In the spring of 1872, General Trochu, feeling aggrieved by some observations on his conduct which appeared in the *Figaro*, where he was charged with treachery to the Empire and desertion of the Empress, brought an action for libel against that journal. This action (which extended over several days) was tried in the Assize Court of the Seine, and was the means of bringing out a good deal of curious evidence, the effect of which was certainly not to heighten the reputation of the former Governor of Paris. By a law passed since the fall of the Empire, the truth of a libel may be pleaded whenever the plaintiff is a public functionary. In the present case, a justification was alleged, and accordingly the witnesses for the defence were examined first. Count Palikao, the last Minister of War under the Empire, said that Trochu, after his appointment to the command of the 12th Corps, at Châlons, ordered back to Paris 12,000 undisciplined Mobiles, who, in his (Palikao's) opinion, were sure to be an element of disorder. He also, in a letter to the *Temps*, written after he had become Governor of Paris, spoke of his preference for "moral

force" in such a way as to imply that he was not prepared to resort to necessary repression in case of attempted revolution. On the 3rd of September, Palikao in vain endeavoured to see Trochu. Early in the evening of the memorable 4th, the latter called on the former while he was overcome with grief at the supposed loss of his son, and told him he was there to take his place; but (according to the evidence of Count Palikao) Trochu did not say that he had just come from the Hôtel de Ville, where he had accepted the functions of President of a Revolutionary Government. At the conclusion of Palikao's evidence, M. Lachaud, counsel for the conductors of the *Figaro*, asked the witness what was now his impressson of General Trochu's conduct on September 4th. The count replied that he doubted whether, as a witness called to testify to facts, he ought to state his impressions, which might be wrong. The Judge, however, begged him to give the best answer he could; and he then replied, with much emphasis, "Well, I think it most extraordinary that General Trochu should have been an Imperial Governor of Paris on the morning of September 4th, and a Republican Governor in the evening."

Other Ministers under the Regency deposed to the irritable susceptibility of General Trochu, which made it obvious from the first that he would quarrel with Palikao. M. Busson-Billault, President of the Council of State, said that when General Trochu made professions in Ministerial Councils of his devotion to the dynasty, he was one day asked what practical measures he would take if the Assembly or the Tuileries were to be invaded. He said, "I only know of one way of doing my duty. Rather than tolerate the outrages supposed, I would get myself killed on the steps of the Tuileries." M. Rouher confirmed this evidence; and when asked whether he had heard the often-quoted expression of General Trochu, that he would defend the Empress and the dynasty to the last, on the word of "a soldier, a Breton, and a Catholic," the witness replied that he did not hear them himself, but that they were repeated to him by the Empress when he saw her in England. M. Schneider related to the court that he had given General Trochu, at his request, two permanent cards of admission for his friends to the tribunes of the Corps Législatif, and that on the 4th of September he observed two of Trochu's agents constantly in their places all through the day, up to the time when the Assembly was invaded. Among the other witnesses were Marshal MacMahon and General Changarnier; but nothing material was obtained from either.

M. Allou, the counsel for General Trochu, quoted several high testimonials to character, and repeated on behalf of his client the same statements which the general had made on his own behalf in the address to the National Assembly quoted above. He also said that Trochu, so far from being ambitious or treasonable, was ready to perform a task which no other leader in the French army was then disposed to undertake. He was prepared to ride before the Emperor from the Strasburg railway to the Tuileries, and protest against a hostile population. The counsels of the Empress and Count Palikao prevented this combination. General Trochu was only tolerated by the Government of the Regency, which did all it could to hamper his action. He was in no way responsible for the invasion of the Assembly on September 4th, because Count Palikao, the Minister of War, ignoring his authority as Governor of Paris, had given direct orders to the troops told off for the service of protecting the Corps Législatif. The Empress, for whom as a woman and an unfortunate sovereign M. Allou said he felt the most profound respect, had shown General Trochu from the first a painful want of confidence. He submitted to the jury that when she said to Trochu, "Suppose we call back the Orleans Princes?" her only object was to tempt him, because she suspected him of being an Orleanist. General Trochu replied that, under other circumstances, he would cheerfully have concurred in repealing the laws of proscription, but he did not think such a measure expedient then. He submitted that the events which occurred entirely released General Trochu from the engagements he had made to the Emperor at Châlons. All the promises made to him were broken, and he found himself, with the nominal title of Governor of Paris, thwarted by the Regency in all his attempts to do something useful. M. Allou denied or discredited several statements with regard to General Trochu's defence of Paris, which he was accused of conducting weakly, inefficiently, and with a view rather to the satisfaction of his own vanity than to the interests of the country.

The speech of M. Grandperret in defence of the *Figaro* involved a most trenchant attack on Trochu, not merely for betraying the Empire, but for prolonging the defence of Paris when it had become quite hopeless, in order that he might avert popular wrath from himself. At the sortie of Buzenval, on the 19th of January, 1871, every arrangement, said M. Grandperret, had been made *not* to succeed. The general had admitted to many people that he had no hope of success on that occasion. Buzenval was intended to prepare the public for the inevitable capitulation, which was a foregone con-

clusion in Trochu's mind. The general had always been a grumbler; yet the Emperor had promoted him with exceptional rapidity. Alluding to the events of the 4th of September, the advocate of the *Figaro* treated as wholly incredible General Trochu's assertion that when he had got as far as the Solferino bridge, on his way to the Corps Législatif, he was stopped by a "tall man," whom he did not know to be Jules Favre until he announced himself, and that, upon his simple statement that the Assembly was invaded, and that it was useless to go there, he turned back. M. Grandperret distinctly charged General Trochu with having several days before conspired with Jules Favre, Picard, Jules Simon, and other members of the Left, with a view to overthrowing the dynasty. At five in the afternoon of September 4th, having come from the Hôtel de Ville as the head of a Revolutionary Government, he took possession of the Ministry of War, and at twenty minutes after five he issued an order to General Vinoy. His excuse was that no lawful authority remained; and yet, several hours after, on that very evening, there was a night sitting of the Corps Législatif, and he might have rallied round and protected the Assembly. He had promised to die on the steps of the Tuileries in defence of the Empress; and yet he had basely deserted her.

During the delivery of this striking speech, General Trochu, according to the reporters, looked like a baited animal, and at times his counsel was obliged to restrain him physically, lest he should have flung himself on M. Grandperret. He was afterwards allowed to address the court personally, which he did for three hours, though he had said he would be very brief. The address was in the main a recapitulation of the statements already made in the National Assembly. The general alleged that Prince Napoleon, in his presence, said to the Emperor at Châlons:—"You have resigned the Government to a Regency, and now you are obliged to resign the command of the army, owing to reverses. Take care, or you will soon be nothing in public estimation. The best thing for you to do is to go to Paris, and resume the reins of government at the Tuileries. Trochu will cover you with his popularity." Continuing his speech to the court, Trochu professed not to remember whether he had said to the Empress, "Madam, as a Breton, a Catholic, and a soldier, I will protect you;" but those words expressed his thoughts, and he had acted up to them to the extent of possibility. In regard to Buzenval, he wished to say that, contrary to the opinions of many generals, he all along thought that the National Guard might be made good troops when blended in certain proportions with regulars. All the generals thought the sortie by Buzenval feasible. How, then, could it be said that he went there certain of defeat, and with no other object than the horrible one of getting the troops slaughtered?

The upshot of the trial was that the jury returned a verdict of "Not Guilty" of defamation, but "Guilty" of outrage, or insult. That is to say, the jury did not appear to consider that the conductors of the *Figaro* had gone farther than they were capable of justifying in charging the general with treachery to the Empire and the Empress, and with grossly misconducting the defence of Paris; but they regarded as needlessly insulting a certain phrase which the *Figaro* professed to borrow from General Changarnier, and which spoke of Trochu as a Tartuffe in a charlatan's helmet, to which the journalist added some references of his own to Pontius Pilate, Judas, and certain well-known modern criminals. The defendants were each sentenced to one month's imprisonment, and ordered to pay a fine of 3,000 francs. The general politics of the *Figaro* are Legitimist; but the article in question was written by a known Buonapartist.

In the course of his speech for the defendants, M. Grandperret read the following letter from the Empress Eugénie to a friend, referring to Trochu's personal explanations in the Assembly in June, 1871:—

"My dear Anna,—I have just read in the *Journal Officiel* the speech of General Trochu. I know not whether my indignation will be strong enough to enable me to surmount the disgust which I experience in thinking of this man, who, after having betrayed and deserted his Sovereign, attempts to dishonour a woman from a French tribune. In a fantastic narrative, he ventures to represent me as an ambitious creature prepared to sacrifice both the nation and the Emperor, and anxious to strike out the Emperor's name from a proclamation, for reasons which the general has found in his own heart, but which, thank God! have never found a place in mine. The general skirts the truth just as he skirted the Tuileries—without entering it. He avails himself of a fact in order to distort it. The first of his proclamations, of which he showed me the draft on the night of the 19th of August, stated that the general preceded the Emperor by a few hours only. When the contingency of that return was set aside, it was, of course, necessary to modify that sentence. I mentioned that to the general, and this is the incident of which he avails himself to represent me in such an odious light. You, who know that the Emperor has become more dear to me since his misfortunes—you, who know how much I admire his abnegation, his courage, his unshakable calmness in the presence of the vilest calumnies—do you think I would have chosen to renounce him at such a time? There

is also another accusation that I must notice. General Trochu pretends that the Government of the Regency did nothing towards the defence of the capital from the 17th of August to the 4th of September. The inquiry, I feel convinced, will show that the reverse was the case. Moreover, the general accuses himself, as he was the head of the Council of Defence. There was nobody who could possibly counteract his plans. The general had concentrated in his hands all the powers of the state of siege—those exceptional powers which Cavaignac wielded in 1848, and MacMahon in 1871. As for myself, I resolutely accept the share of responsibility that accrues to me in the political events I was mixed up with during my tenure of the Regency; but there is one honour which belongs to me, and of which I will not allow myself to be robbed—the honour of having had but one thought, the safety of the country, and of having made all dynastic considerations subservient to that great cause.—Your affectionate aunt, (Signed) "EUGÉNIE."



GENERAL FROSSARD.

It was generally held that Trochu had done himself a great disservice by this action against the *Figaro*.

VI.

THE BATTLES BEFORE METZ.

THE *Indépendance Belge*, early in November, 1870, published a narrative of events occurring in and around Metz during the siege. The paper was from the pen of a superior officer belonging to the French Army of the Rhine (Bazaine's), and contained some interesting particulars of the Titanic

battles waged in that locality in the month of August. After the departure of the Emperor from Metz, the army crossed from the right to the left bank of the Moselle, crowding itself upon the two roads to Verdun—roads difficult to traverse, by reason of the numerous steep ascents and defiles to be met with in the various villages. The march was badly ordered, the troops being encumbered with quantities of baggage, mixed up with parks of artillery; and the enemy, on the 14th of August, took advantage of the exposed position of the advanced columns, which were widely scattered along the roads, and attacked the third corps of General Decaen. L'Admirault, who was already across the bridges, wheeled about with the two divisions he had in hand, and ascended at the charge the heights of St. Julien, to free his colleague. The combat, according to the present authority, terminated in a complete victory for the French. The Germans, as related at pp. 41–2, Vol. I., of this work, claimed the victory for themselves, and alleged that they drove the French into the very *glacis* of the fortress; but it appears in truth to have been a drawn battle. The French continued their retreat (which, of course, it was the object of the Prussians to prevent), and during the night General Decaen was mortally wounded. Pursuing his narrative, the writer says :—

"On the 16th, the Emperor having started before, escorted by two regiments of the Chasseurs d'Afrique, the army was encamping on the plateau of Gravelotte, when the 2nd Corps was surprised by an unexpected attack. The first troops attacked retreated in disorder; but the battle was renewed speedily, and was especially maintained by the 2nd and 4th Corps, and by the Guard. There were on one side and on the other feats of extraordinary bravery. Marshal Bazaine and his escort were surrounded by a hurricane of Uhlans, who had passed between the French lines, and who, though attacked from all sides, were able to retreat with few losses. The 3rd Chasseurs, and a regiment of Hussars whose number escapes me, encountered two regiments of Lancers and Cuirassiers, whom they destroyed. The cavalry of the 4th Corps charged right down upon the enemy's cavalry, who



PRINCE OF HOHENZOLLERN.

allowed them to come up—an extremely rare occurrence in war. Finally, all the enemy's positions were taken, save that of Vionville, a village on a height at the head of one of the abrupt ravines which descend to Gorze, and where the beaten troops were able to find shelter. Night was then coming on, and the Prussian cavalry performed a last act of devotion by suddenly pouring out upon the extremity of the French lines to arrest pursuit. From the side of Rezonville the field had been won as far as the head of the ravines of Gorze, where horse and foot, hurled back on their reserve, fell literally in heaps under the fire of our artillery. This was a complete victory, and not bought too dearly. The troops passed the night upon the battle-field, and next day took up positions in the rear. There, as was always the case, the marches were so badly arranged that the corps were mingled one with the other, and with the baggage; and the division of Lorencez, not being able to get through the confusion, took thirty-six hours in travelling two leagues. In all the combats round Metz, two important facts are to be noted. The Prussian infantry never stood before ours, and we could never come up to it, except by surprise. Our artillery showed its superiority both in the number and the calibre of the guns, which secured longer range and greater accuracy; but in the latter days the gunners were far from being equal to those of the first. In the Prussian army, the number of the dead seemed always to have been very great, and the wounds very severe. Among us, on the contrary, there was a small proportion of dead, with regard to the number of wounded, and a large number of slight wounds. This seems to prove the superiority of the French armament."

The writer goes on to describe the terrible battle of Gravelotte, fought on the 18th of August. The whole weight of this action, he says, had to be borne by the 4th and 6th Corps, aided by the 2nd:—

"The 4th Corps, on the left, occupied the plateau of Genivaux from the Verdun road to the village of Armanvillers, given in the course of the day to the 6th Corps, which stretched from thence to the village of St. Privat-la-Montagne, and to the woods which cover the long slopes towards the Lower Moselle. The roads in the rear continued to be encumbered with baggage-wagons and carriages of every kind, through which the ammunition-wagons could scarcely move. Up to four o'clock the fight was not only maintained, but General l'Admirault, pivoting upon his left, made an effective charge with his whole right, repulsing the Prussian troops in the most frightful disorder. Unfortunately, at the same moment, Marshal Canrobert, fearing to be turned by his right, where the advanced guards of the enemy were appearing in the woods, made on his part a movement in the opposite direction, leaving the village of St. Privat, and opening a wide gap between the 4th and 6th Corps. Why were not the Guard, who were in reserve a little to the rear ordered to move up and fill in this gap in the ranks? I do not know. As fatalities accumulated in these fearful affairs, an officer went to the rear, to demand urgently ammunition for the artillery. A sub-officer heard the demand, wished to render himself useful, sought the ammunition, and found it not; he then hurried along the causeway which unites the plateaux at Metz, by the village of Saulny. In a short time he no longer asked for the ammunition—he implored that it should be given him; his cries terrified the mass of carriers, and an incredible panic resulted; drivers, horses, and carriages rushed off madly, and were tumbled over the declivity in heaps. It was a rout which only ended in Metz, and the effect of which was soon felt in the army, which the enemy, moreover, had cut in two; for they entered the gap left between the 4th and 6th Corps, the last-named being compelled to make a precipitate retreat. The right of the 4th Corps was compromised even by its successes, for it received cannon-shot on the flank, and even in the rear. Then this corps was in turn routed. The left alone maintained the ground it had won, as well as a few isolated corps which remained for a portion of the night in positions more or less strongly entrenched, such as the Château of Montigny-le-Grange. Then an occurrence took place which is almost incredible, but which is nevertheless affirmed by eye-witnesses. General l'Admirault, remaining alone in position (he commanded on the right), became alarmed, asked what was expected of him, and demanded instructions. He despatched officer after officer; nothing came to him; the Marshal had returned home; he was asleep, and they refused to rouse him. Part of his army was defeated, and he was asleep! It was with great difficulty that a captain who got into his lodgings was able to have his demand conveyed to him. The reply came at last; it was an order to retreat, and all the army was huddled together upon the slopes, and in the plain behind the forts of St. Quentin and des Carrières."

The writer blames the Engineers for adhering to exploded rules in the defence of Metz, and for not taking sufficiently into account the range of modern artillery. A delay of some days was necessary to restore order among the corps beaten on the 18th; and then every one waited impatiently for orders which were not given. Meanwhile, the Prussians lost no time. They erected batteries on the surrounding heights, and no attempt was made to interfere with them. The officer proceeds:—

"At last, on the 26th August, the impatient army commenced a march, but not in the direction of Verdun; they recrossed the bridges, and were again huddled together in the narrow space near Fort St. Julien, again destroying the vines under the feet of men and horses, as they had ravaged those of the opposite bank. Where were they going? No one knew; but it was said in a whisper that they meant to seek at Thionville provisions and munitions, which were beginning to fail at Metz. The quantity of munitions given up to the Prussians will tell if there was any foundation in this

assertion of want, which I have heard both sustained and contested. We set off then? Not at all. Rain was falling, a march was impossible, and we returned to our old encampments despite the reflections of those who thought that the rain was wetting everybody, and ought to interfere with the manœuvres of the Prussians as well as with ours. This was a fresh delay, made good use of by the enemy, who, despite the rain, erected breastworks everywhere, and armed with cannon the sides of the roads by which we had appeared to have purposed moving. On our side, the artillery corps armed the forts actively, but, with this exception, did little for the defence of the place."

There were plenty of men in the town for the defence of Metz, but very little trouble was taken to put them into a state fit for service. The Sedentary National Guard, however, drilled and formed, according to this authority, in an irreproachable manner. In the organisation of the ambulances the townspeople heartily joined. Small-pox broke out in one of these ambulances, and the number of persons wounded, fever-smitten, or otherwise sick, was never less than 30,000. The officer gives some account of the action of August 31st, which took place at the moment when Mac-Mahon was fighting on the Meuse. He professes ignorance as to whether Bazaine was informed of the efforts that were being made to effect a junction with him. In any case, however, he adds, the attempt was too late; it should have been made some days earlier. Towards the end of August, the army had resumed its former positions on the left, or western, bank of the Moselle. Two corps, however, still remained on the right bank—the 2nd Corps between the Upper Moselle and the Seille, and the 3rd between that little river and the Lower Moselle, where it was encamped round the forts of Queleu and St. Julien.

"In their rear, on the night of the 30th-31st of August, the corps on the left bank crossed the river, and were massed, followed by their baggage, round Fort St. Julien; the 3rd Corps, leaning on the left, came to join this imposing force, occupying the two sides of the deep ravine of Vallières; the 2nd Corps, crossing the Seille, followed the movement to form the right of the army. From eight or nine in the morning, the greater part of these troops were massed in their positions for battle. The Prussians made signal after signal to call up reinforcements on the point threatened, where their inferiority was manifest. But perhaps Marshal Bazaine did not care to make a serious attack, for he remained where he was till four o'clock; then only there commenced a violent combat of artillery, which, at the close of about two hours, was ended by the retreat or destruction of the Prussian batteries. The infantry, finding themselves beyond the range of their rifles, lay down, and would have served by their immovability as an excellent mark for the enemy, had not the latter been sufficiently engaged by the exigencies of his critical situation. Towards six o'clock, General Changarnier, who, as an amateur, was following the movements of the 3rd Corps, having become impatient of this prolonged inactivity, ordered the charge to be sounded, and sent forward the division of Montaudon. The village of Nouilly was rapidly passed through, and that of Noisseville, though defended by a formidable barricade, was soon carried at the point of the bayonet, while the regiments of the 3rd and 4th Corps carried in the same manner the village of Servigny. If this attack had taken place sooner, and if General Frossard had been less prudent, and had seconded the manœuvre by turning the Prussian left by Montoy and Reton Foy, great masses would have been thrown upon the slopes of the Moselle, and would have inflicted on the enemy a defeat which might speedily have proved an utter rout. But it was late; long and useless waiting had fatigued the troops, and it appeared easier to be satisfied with the advantages gained. Marshal Bazaine returned tranquilly to St. Julien, leaving his troops without direction, scarcely a battalion to guard the most advanced positions. Twenty-four cannon had fallen into our possession, and an artillery officer, having the harness at his disposal, proposed to carry them off. 'We shall have time to-morrow,' was the reply. I have been told, but I cannot assert it, that General Changarnier took care to break their breech-pieces. If this be true, it was well, for there was not time to carry away trophies. Attacked in the night by superior forces, the advanced posts were lost, and the struggle was renewed at day-break by the 3rd and 4th Corps without superior orders, or any general command. From the state of things, the fight must have gone on till about eleven o'clock, when the firing ceased altogether. There were neither conquerors nor conquered, for we had not attempted to retake the villages lost during the night, and the Prussians continued to keep at a respectful distance from the great guns of Fort St. Julien. From this time, and until the end of the month, the army remained perfectly at rest. It was startled only once by an occurrence, the reason of which was known afterwards. On the 9th of September, at the close of the day, and during torrents of rain, all the enemy's batteries at once thundered upon the town and the forts. . . . This was done to possess a column of prisoners with the belief that Metz was being regularly bombarded."

The officer sketches the subsequent history of the siege in the same spirit, and complains of constant mismanagement. His feeling against Marshal Bazaine is very strong.

VII.

SIEGE RECORDS OF METZ.

In a letter from Metz, dated November 13th, 1870, and published in the *Times*, some details are given, on the authority of official information, and of local newspapers, with respect to the progress of affairs in the city itself during the siege. Describing the last few days previous to the surrender, the writer says :—

"On October 20th, 12,000 rations were to be delivered daily to the indigent, and on the 21st the military authorities notify that they can deliver no more horses for the city. The number which have died during the siege from exhaustion and want of forage and shelter has been enormous. On October 22nd, at the meeting of the Council, General Coffinières and a number of officers enter. He has come to tell them plainly the position of the city as regards provisions. He can give bread to the army and city for very few more days. As to the few horses left, he has come to consult with them upon the best means of consuming them. One Common Councilman objects to the price asked by the officers for their horses. The general inquires whether the Council has heard the common report that provisions had for a long time been hidden in the town. The Council reply unanimously that they have had careful search made, and the discoveries have been insignificant; and a member retaliates by asking the general if what is said is true, that the military administration had preserved important stores, notably in the caserne of the Engineers. He replies that a Commission, of which the Mayor was a member, had made a most minute inventory of everything in the army magazines, and that, if any citizen desired to verify this, the magazines should at once be opened to him. He was interrogated whether an army of succour could be hoped for, and he answered that if they sought his private opinion there was no hope of it whatever. On October 23rd, the general issued a decree for a mixed Commission, civil and military, charged with the selection of the horses remaining to be killed in succession, and paid for by valuation. As coal was running short, no gas was to be burnt after seven o'clock. On October 26th, the horses sold by auction for the *abattoirs* realised prices from 60f. to 700f.—a curious discrepancy of values, seeing that they were all sold purely as butchers' meat. So eager were the public to eat these noble chargers, which the officers had reserved to the last moment, that the papers remark :—'On this occasion it was decided to require the General Commandant to authorise the immediate closing of all the butchers' shops which did not sell the meat at the regulated price, and, in order to avoid any fraud, all the horses purchased should be immediately conducted to the *abattoirs*, under the surveillance of an agent of police, and watched there up to the moment of slaughter.'

"On the 27th of October, a mournful proclamation appears, announcing the impending capitulation. There was just sufficient food left to hold out for three days longer. On the 29th appears, happily, the last number of that remarkable paper, *Le Journal de Metz*. It is a curiosity. It begins with the text of the 'Marseillaise,' to which a running commentary of the most frantic kind is attached. Next follows an insane article headed 'The Capitulation,' in which the public are informed that ten thousand families of Metz insist upon defending themselves until all their goods are burnt, and they are slaughtered upon the ramparts :—'We will kill ourselves, our families ; and after this you dare to talk of capitulation ! Reach out your fraternal hand to us ; partake of our modest repast, our mean provisions. So long as we have bread and horseflesh, you shall share them; and Metz will never surrender.'"

On that same day the Germans took possession of the city.

A singular instance of German energy during the progress of the siege of Metz was mentioned by the writer of a letter from Toul in the *Cologne Gazette*, in the autumn of 1870. It was here stated that "when the fortress of Metz interrupted the railway from Saarbrück through Pont-à-Mousson to Paris, and by Nancy to Strasburg, General Moltke, on the 20th of August, directed the construction of a railway, fourteen miles long, from Metz, to unite the Metz and Saarbrück with the Metz and Paris line. Herr Weisshaupt undertook the direction; skilful civil and military engineers were placed at his disposal; 3,000 unemployed miners from the Saarbrück collieries were set to labour; and amid the thunder of cannon the work began. This railway leads from Pont-à-Mousson to Remily, on the Saarbrück and Metz line; and it was prosecuted night and day so actively that, in spite of the partially very difficult country it had to pass through, it was opened a few days ago, so that Metz now causes no interruption to our railway communications." The writer was of opinion that the line would be of importance even in time of peace, as the route from Bingen and the Middle Rhineland to Paris was thus shortened by about fourteen miles.

VIII.

MARSHAL BAZAINE ON THE FRENCH ARMY AND THE SIEGE OF METZ.

In the spring of 1872, Marshal Bazaine published a work entitled "The Army of the Rhine, from August 12th to October 29th, 1870." Prefacing his narrative by some "general considerations," the Marshal observes that the Prussian victories over Austria in 1866 opened the eyes of France to the imminent danger which menaced her.

"The railways gave to strategical movements a rapidity before unknown; tactics were essentially modified by a system of rapid firing, very disadvantageous to nervous and impressionable races like ours. We held conference upon conference about the three arms (infantry, cavalry, and artillery) at the Ministry of War, and in camps of instruction and garrisons. The ideas promulgated in these conferences may have been good, but the principal result of them was to paralyse our officers. The proposed and ill-developed innovations, having received the consecration neither of time nor of actual fighting, overturned old rules of tactics, without replacing them by others that commanded confidence. The Mobile National Guard was created; but it only existed on paper when the *plébiscite* of May, 1870, let all the world know what was the real number of our soldiers in active service. There never was a more favourable opportunity to make war upon us. Prussia saw her advantage, and at once availed herself of it. Knowing the ardour and pride of the French character, and the impatient presentiment we had of a war against her, she laid a trap for us, into which we fell. Appearances were in favour of Prussia, for it was France that declared war. But the resources of France were not ready; we could oppose only a very limited number of men to the legions which Prussia was enabled to marshal under her flag by representing to Germany that we coveted certain Rhenish provinces."

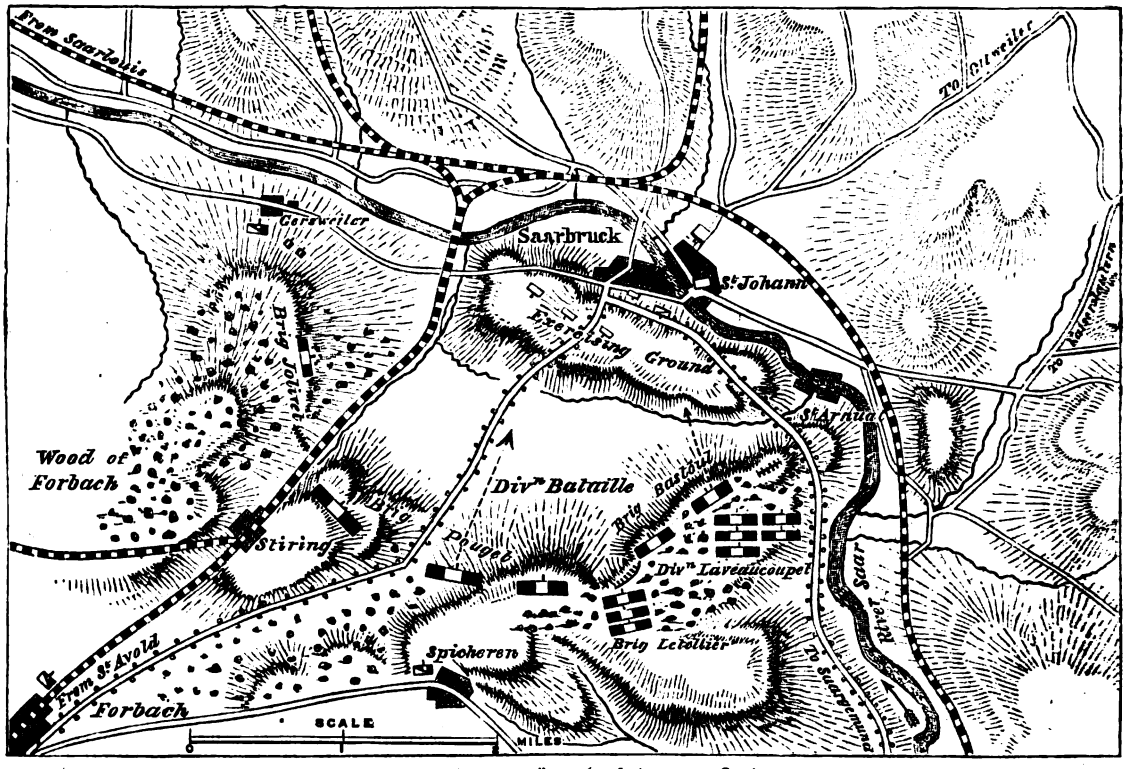
Under these circumstances, the French ought, in the opinion of the Marshal, to have maintained a defensive attitude, to have occupied certain well-known strategical positions (covered by rapidly-executed works), and to have entrenched the Vosges passes. Not being superior in numbers, they should have recurred to the tactics of the seventeenth century, and have operated methodically. The immense destructive power of modern armaments imposed upon them the duty of following the offensive in strategy, and the defensive in tactics. All the French fortresses stood in urgent need of modifications, and of distant outworks, placed in positions where they could protect the main works from the fire of plunging artillery at long ranges. Some alterations, with a view to multiplying traverses on the ramparts, protecting the powder magazines by iron bars, and adding to the number of casemates, were commenced before the war broke out, but they were never finished. Attempts, also, were made to garrison the strong places; but the forces sent were insufficient, and there was a want of funds for carrying out other necessary operations. Moreover, the Marshal remarks, many of the strong places of France had no longer the same strategical importance as formerly, unless they could so command the railways as to render them unserviceable to the enemy. In this category he classes Metz, the works of which were far from being finished at the period of the rupture with Germany. Pointing out the reforms necessary in the French army, Bazaine writes:—

"The instruction of our infantry should above all things tend to give our soldiers that coolness which is foreign to their temperament. Their impressionability can only be modified by long and solid military education and strong discipline. Enthusiasm in these days is of small account against the power of destructive engines, and science alone can struggle against them in war. We should make less use than we are apt to do of sheltering trenches, and should not so often make our soldiers lie down. Being used to these tactics they become timid; and when the word is given to rise and go forward, they very often hang back. It would be well to accustom our infantry to act in their lines, so that when in action their ammunition may not be wasted, especially as modern cartridges are far more difficult than the old ones to be manufactured in the field. Finally, the infantry soldier should be inured to long marches, so that he may be ready for those great turning movements which now, more than anything else, decide the fate of battles. The light cavalry should be augmented, so as to cover our armies by many detachments, extending over a space of from three to five leagues. The mission of these *éclaireurs* is to watch the slightest movements of the enemy, to make prisoners of his spies, to take his correspondence, cut off his communications, and spread false news, to embarrass him and lead him into error. We should be less careless than we are wont to be about the outposts, which are the eyes of an army. Officers and non-commissioned officers in command of these detachments should be night and day on the alert, interrogating the inhabitants, &c. We have all the requisite qualities for such service, and need only conform to the regulations of 1832. The system which was adopted, of attaching a regiment of cavalry to every division of infantry, is defective, unless in the case of

the division being detached. A number of squadrons are thus rendered comparatively unserviceable, as their separate action on a battle-field can produce no good result. Large and distinct corps of cavalry are always an indispensable auxiliary, whether at the moment of action or for distant expeditions. The divisional artillery should be restored to its independence—that is to say, a greater amount of initiative should be left to commanders of batteries, so that they may act as light artillery, as in the wars of the First Empire. The batteries should contain eight guns, and be armed with

useful military institution as a reserve, if the want of funds had not stopped its organisation. When the war began, its *cadres* were not all formed, the men had not been drilled, and its arms were in the arsenals; and it was at the last moment that an appeal was made to these young and valiant troops. Disorder and confusion were the inevitable results. Under other circumstances, the Mobile National Guard might have rendered valuable services from the beginning. . . .

"The campaign of 1870 showed abundant proofs of the vices of our organisation. Never before were



AFFAIR OF SAARBRÜCK (2nd August, 1870).

FORCE ENGAGED.

FRENCH (Second Corps, Frossard) . .	
Division Bataille. Two brigades . .	= 15 battalions.
Division Laveaucoupet ,, . .	= 15 ,,
Division Brigade Letellier	= 9 ,,
,, Jolivet	= 6 ,,
Cavalry	1 squadron.

GERMAN (From First Army, Steinmetz) . .	
Battalion 4th Fusiliers (8th Corps).	
Squadrons 7th Uhlans (2nd Reserve Cavalry Division).	
Battalions of the 8th Corps.	

percussion fusees. In no case should the munition boxes be laden with sacks and ropes, as is now too much the habit. Calling out the reserves at the last moment is a delusion. The old soldiers do not recover their habits of discipline for some time; they are unused to marching, and do not know the new arms and changes in drill. When brought long distances by rail in the face of an enemy, they get knocked up on the first march, fall out foot-sore, and, instead of encouraging the young soldiers, set them a bad example. The right thing would be to form the reserves into an active army considerably in the rear of the theatre of active operations, and bring them forward when they are ascertained to be serviceable. The Mobile National Guard would have been a really

seen such heavy losses of camp material. . . . . A regrettable tendency to criticism and discussion has of late years developed itself in the army. Officers should have more respect for their leaders, and should not suppose that the general who issues an order is bound at the same time to give his reasons; without secresy, command is impossible. Obedience should be immediate; the officer's greatest merit is to execute the orders he receives to the best of his intelligence, without inquiring the reason why. With the present rapid effect of destructive arms, the slightest mistake becomes irreparable. Commanding officers, no matter of what rank, should always act with the utmost prudence, and thoroughly know the country in which they are to operate. A knowledge of geography is



MARSHAL LEBŒUF AT THE COUNCIL.

therefore essential to officers and non-commissioned officers; and it is of imperative necessity that good maps should be distributed to them at the outset of a campaign. It is also desirable that foreign languages should be more generally known in the army than they are."

Marshal Bazaine, in telling the story of his siege-life at Metz, says that, at a council of war held on the 26th of August, the unanimous opinion of all the generals present was that the army must remain within the protection of the fortress, though Marshal Canrobert held that the *morale* of the soldiers must be maintained by repeated attacks, with the object of doing the enemy all possible harm. On the 16th of September, Prince Frederick Charles wrote to Marshal Bazaine, informing him, with expressions of regret, that the Imperial Regency had been replaced by a Republic, which, however, had not been recognised in every part of France, nor by any of the Monarchical Powers. Shortly after this, began those mysterious negotiations which caused so much speculation at the time. It subsequently appeared that the Prussian Government was ready to consent to the Army of the Rhine leaving Metz, and repairing to some other part of France (to be afterwards agreed upon), in accordance with the following conditions:—The army was to declare itself still the servant of the Empire, and determined to maintain the Regency: this declaration was to be published simultaneously with a manifesto of the Empress, summoning the members of the Corps Législatif and Senate to meet under the protection of the Army of the Rhine; and at the same time the Empress was to authorise a delegate to sign a treaty of peace with Germany. The scheme would probably have been set in motion, had not the generals in association with Bazaine expressed their belief that the soldiers could not be relied on to execute such a programme. The project accordingly fell to pieces, and it was then resolved to make renewed attempts to break through the Prussian lines, although the majority of the generals regarded such efforts as desperate and unadvisable. In the course of October, Prince Bismarck informed Marshal Bazaine that, as the cause of the Empire appeared to be sustained neither by the nation nor the army, the King of Prussia must give up all thought of negotiating with the Regency. The hope of saving Metz was now at an end, and the capitulation followed in a few days.

IX.

THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON ON THE CAPITULATION OF SEDAN.

General Ducrot has added to the various memoirs of the war by a work on the capitulation of Sedan, published in the autumn of 1871. In that portion which has reference to the conduct of the Emperor Napoleon just before the surrender, he says, after describing the terrible state of confusion in the town on the night of September 1st, and in the early morning of the 2nd, and the utter want of discipline among the troops:—"Some men who had preserved a remnant of energy seemed to use it only in accusations, exclaiming, 'We have been betrayed; we have been sold by traitors and cowards.' There was evidently nothing to be done with such men." Under these circumstances, General Ducrot proceeded to the sub-prefecture, where the Emperor was. "Napoleon III.," he proceeds to say, "had no longer that cold, unimpassioned countenance with which all the world is familiar. The cruel emotions which agitated him had imprinted on his face an aspect of profound sadness." As soon as he saw General Ducrot, he said to him that he had deeply regretted the nomination by the Minister of War of General Wimpffen to the command-in-chief, but that, being resolved not to contravene in any respect the decisions which came from Paris, he had determined not to oppose it. "However," added he, "there is nothing but your movement of retreat that could save us." Then, alluding to events anterior to the war, he added, "Your presentiments as to the intentions of Prussia—what you said to me respecting its military forces and the small means which we should have of opposing them—all that was but too true. I ought to have paid more heed to your warnings and advice." After these few words, the Emperor was silent. "I don't understand," he at length said to General Ducrot, "why the enemy continues to fire. I have caused the flag of truce to be hoisted. I hope to obtain an interview with the King of Prussia; perhaps I shall secure advantageous conditions for the army." "I do not reckon much," replied the general, "upon the generosity of our enemies; at night, we might be able to attempt a sortie." His Majesty observed that there was such disorder, such obstruction, in the town, and, moreover, the troops were so demoralised, that there was not the least hope of success. "An attempt of that sort," he added,

"would only end in fresh bloodshed." General Ducrot believes that the Emperor and some officers of his suite might have escaped in the darkness during the night following the fatal 1st; but he suggests that, having shared the dangers of his army, Napoleon did right in also sharing its misfortunes.

With reference to the same subject, the *Gaulois* of May 24th, 1872, published a letter of the Emperor Napoleon, dated Chislehurst, May 12th, 1872, and addressed to the generals and commandants of army corps. The letter was written in consequence of the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Capitulation of Sedan; and in it the Emperor remarked:—

"I am responsible to the country, and I can accept no other judgment than that of the nation, regularly consulted. Nor is it for me to pass an opinion on the report of the Commission on the Capitulation of Sedan. I shall only remind the principal witnesses of that catastrophe of the critical position in which we found ourselves. The army, commanded by the Duke of Magenta, nobly did its duty, and fought heroically against an enemy of twice its number. When driven back to the walls of the town, and into the town itself, 14,000 dead and wounded covered the field of battle, and I saw that to contest the position any longer was an act of desperation, the honour of the army having been saved by the bravery which had been displayed. I then exercised my Sovereign right, and gave orders to unfurl a flag of truce. I claim the entire responsibility of that act. The immolation of 60,000 men could not have saved France, and the sublime devotion of her chiefs and soldiers would have been uselessly sacrificed. We obeyed a cruel but inexorable necessity. My heart was broken, but my conscience was tranquil."

X.

THE DESTRUCTION OF BAZEILLES.

THE destruction of the village or small town of Bazeilles, by the Bavarians, on the 1st of September, 1870, during the battle of Sedan, has been described in the first volume of this work, pp. 95-8. A further account, containing all that can be urged in mitigation of that atrocity, may be here appended. A correspondent of the *Frankfort Zeitung* was in Bazeilles while the fighting was going on, and observed a large, strongly-built house, round which the struggle had eddied for many hours.

"It looked towards two streets, and from the windows on both sides a continuous firing had been kept up. Many Bavarians had already fallen victims of this fire. The house seemed an enchantment, against which the bravery of our soldiers would melt. The pointing of artillery against it was impossible, owing to its situation, and a general bombardment of the hamlet was forbidden by the many wounded who lay in its streets and houses. To destroy the enemy's wall of defence, nothing remained but the invocation of flames. Some pioneers, at great peril, made a circuit, burst in the back of the house, and flung firebrands into the breach. The flames bursting forth compelled the French to abandon their position; they retreated through the garden. The Bavarians stormed after them through the blazing house; but they were, as I was later informed, too hasty in pursuit, and in consequence, as they rushed pell-mell through the garden, encountered the enemy's reserves, who, so far, had taken no part in the fight. Now, again, for our people, was the moment come for a retreat. But this had now well-nigh become an impossibility. The fire had in the interim made such progress, that the house they had rushed through was no longer passable. Two standards were for some time in danger of falling into the enemy's hands. A quick, cool, hotly-maintained fire, which teased the pursuing foe, enabled, during their confusion, the standard-bearers to make a rapid escape over a wall not too high, but many officers who had advanced too far in the attack were cut off, and made prisoners.

"While the struggle was going on behind the houses, I walked up the street. Frightful was the wretchedness I saw there. I was the first person to appear after the storm of battle had passed further away. Dead and wounded lay piled indiscriminately together. Hundreds of dying eyes looked at me imploringly. I was seized with shuddering. I sought to go away. Too terrible was the scene, and yet what was it compared with the barbarity which I had directly after to witness! A wild cry, more like that of an animal than of a human being, rang in my ears. I looked towards the place whence the sound came, and saw a peasant dragging a wounded Bavarian, who was lying on the ground, towards a burning house. A woman was so far aiding that she continued kicking the poor creature in the side with her heavy shoes. The heart-rending cry of the wretched man had drawn three of his comrades to the spot. 'Shoot her down; no, hang her!' Two shots rang out—the peasant dropped. The Megæra laughed, and, before the soldiers had gone three steps forward, she stood once more beside her victim. The woman must have been mad. One blow cleft her skull. 'Hang her up! into the fire with the brute!' While the soldiers gave vent to their evidently outraged feelings, I stooped down to the ill-used

soldier. He was dead. His last breath had passed with his cry for help."

After relating another incident, having reference to an elderly woman who was killed by the Bavarians for firing on them in revenge for the loss of her husband and two sons, the correspondent continues :—

"New tidings of horror arrived. The flames menaced a French hospital established in a mansion. To extinguish the fire was impossible. Our force was to proceed to the rescue of the wounded from the flames. Wounded Krankenträgers appeared, and complained that they were being fired upon from the houses. These complaints were renewed at short intervals, and directions had to be given to search the houses to eject the parties firing. It was a perilous undertaking, costing many a soldier his life; and, though more than fifty men and women were made prisoners, though more than twenty who resisted were shot on the spot, the firing from the houses did not cease. Persistently were the Krankenträgers aimed at, and on all sides was the destruction of the hamlet demanded. Not until fifty of our people had been struck was the order given to fire every house from which shots proceeded. It was punctually fulfilled. The soldiers, heated by the fight and angered at the concealed firing upon them, made short work wherever resistance was shown. The inhabitants—who had been reduced to beggary, and had each lost one if not more of their relatives—had but one feeling, that of revenge. Like the unhappy mother whose end I have narrated, they had no fear of the bullets of their enemy, but welcomed the destroying lead, if first they had slain one of the hated German dogs."

The French deny the atrocities alleged against them; but even if we accept the account of this German writer, it does not amount to anything like a justification of so frightful an act as the firing of a whole town, and the actual burning alive of a large number of men, women, and children—to say nothing of other horrors, which have been both asserted and denied. That the French, as stated by the Germans, threw the wounded Bavarians into the flames of the burning houses, seems exceedingly doubtful.

XI.

INVESTMENTS OF THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON.

M. Piétri, the Emperor Napoleon's private secretary, having denied, in a letter to the *Times* published during September, 1870, that his Majesty had large investments in foreign funds (see Vol. I., p. 155), a person signing himself "Max Pol" addressed a letter, under date October 1st, 1870, to M. Piétri, in which he said that the position he had filled in Paris (the nature of which, however, he did not explain) enabled him to speak with certainty "of the finances of L. N. Buonaparte." He felt sure that the Emperor's treasurer, M. Thélin —"a very honest man"—would not contradict him. The following is a list, in round numbers, of investments abroad which the writer said he "knew" had been made by the Emperor :—

	Francs.
In 1854.—With Baring Brothers, of London ...	4,000,000
„ 1855.—Victoria Bank	6,000,000
„ 1856.—With Kindlet and Co., of Vienna	3,000,000
„ 1860.—With J. B. Jecker, of Mexico	14,000,000
„ 1863.—In the Tunis Loan	3,000,000
„ 1864.—In the Ottoman Loan	5,000,000
„ 1866.—At New York, on mortgage, by Brown Brothers	10,000,000
„ 1867.—In the Russian Loan, by Funder and Co., and Plitz, banker, at St. Petersburg...	3,000,000
Carried forward	48,000,000
Brought forward	48,000,000
In 1869.—The Empress purchased an estate in her own name, at Santander, through Don Trupita	3,000,000
„ 1870.—The Empress purchased another estate, at Alcoy, near Alicant	2,000,000
„ „ Placed with Berg von Dressen, at Amsterdam, for investment	7,000,000
Total	60,000,000

The Tours correspondent of the *Daily News* remarked that the sixty million francs thus enumerated (equivalent to upwards of £2,000,000 sterling) could not by any means represent the full amount of the provision, out of the public purse of France, which the Emperor had made for himself against a rainy day. It occurred to the correspondent that he had real property at Lake Como, at Civita Vecchia, at Rome, and at Aremberg.

The statement of "Max Pol," as far as the investments with Baring Brothers were concerned, received a flat contradiction from that eminent house. In a letter to the *Times*, published on October 24th, 1870, Messrs. Baring Brothers said: —"With reference to various statements which have appeared in the public prints as to the inves-

ments of money said to have been made by our firm for account of the Emperor of the French, or as to stocks and property said to be held by us for his account, we deem it right to state, through the medium of your journal, that at no time have we made any investments for account of the Emperor, and that we do not hold any stocks or objects of value for his account." Another and more inclusive contradiction of the writer of the letter dated October 1st appeared in the *Indépendance Belge* in the shape of a communication from M. Thélin, private treasurer of the Emperor—the "honest man" to whom Max Pol appealed for confirmation of his specific charges. This communication was dated "Wilhelmshöhe, October 25th," and the writer said:—

"In the *Indépendance Belge* of the 16th inst., a M. Max Pol, whom I have not the honour to know, appeals to my testimony to prove that the Emperor Napoleon III., during a reign of eighteen years, invested large sums of money abroad. M. Max Pol is in error. It was not in foreign countries, but in France, that the Emperor made numerous investments, of which I will give you a short statement, as exactly as possible. The Civil List of the Emperor amounted to 25,000,000f. annually, with the addition of 2,000,000f. derived from the Crown forests; total, 27,000,000f. Out of this sum the ordinary expenses of the Civil List absorbed 22,000,000f., as follows:—Disbursements of the Ministry of the Imperial Household, the Grand Almonry, the Marshal of the Palace, the Grand Chamberlain, the Grand Equerry, the Grand Huntsman, the Grand Master of the Ceremonies, the Military Household, the Households of the Empress and the Prince Imperial, the restoration and keeping in repair of the Imperial palaces, the administration of the Crown furniture, the Imperial manufactories of the Gobelins, Sèvres, and Beauvais, travelling expenses, &c. The Emperor reserved annually the sum of five millions, to be expended at his pleasure, without interference with the established public service, as above indicated."

To this statement M. Thélin added a detailed account of the methods in which the Emperor expended the five millions thus set aside during the eighteen years of his power. Speaking broadly, the money appears to have been spent, for the most part, in works of charity; in grants in aid of co-operative societies; in various industrial operations; in works of utility and science; in building churches; in granting various pensions to old servants, invalid soldiers, &c.; in presents and loans; in prizes for horse-races, &c.; and in divers exercises of sovereign munificence. "These are, to my knowledge," said M. Thélin in conclusion, "the principal sums which the Emperor has disbursed, irrespective of his ordinary expenses. I have no knowledge of the existence of any other investments, in France or elsewhere." The sale of the Empress's jewels in 1872 seems to prove that the exiles were not in possession of the great wealth which was at one time imputed to them.

XII.

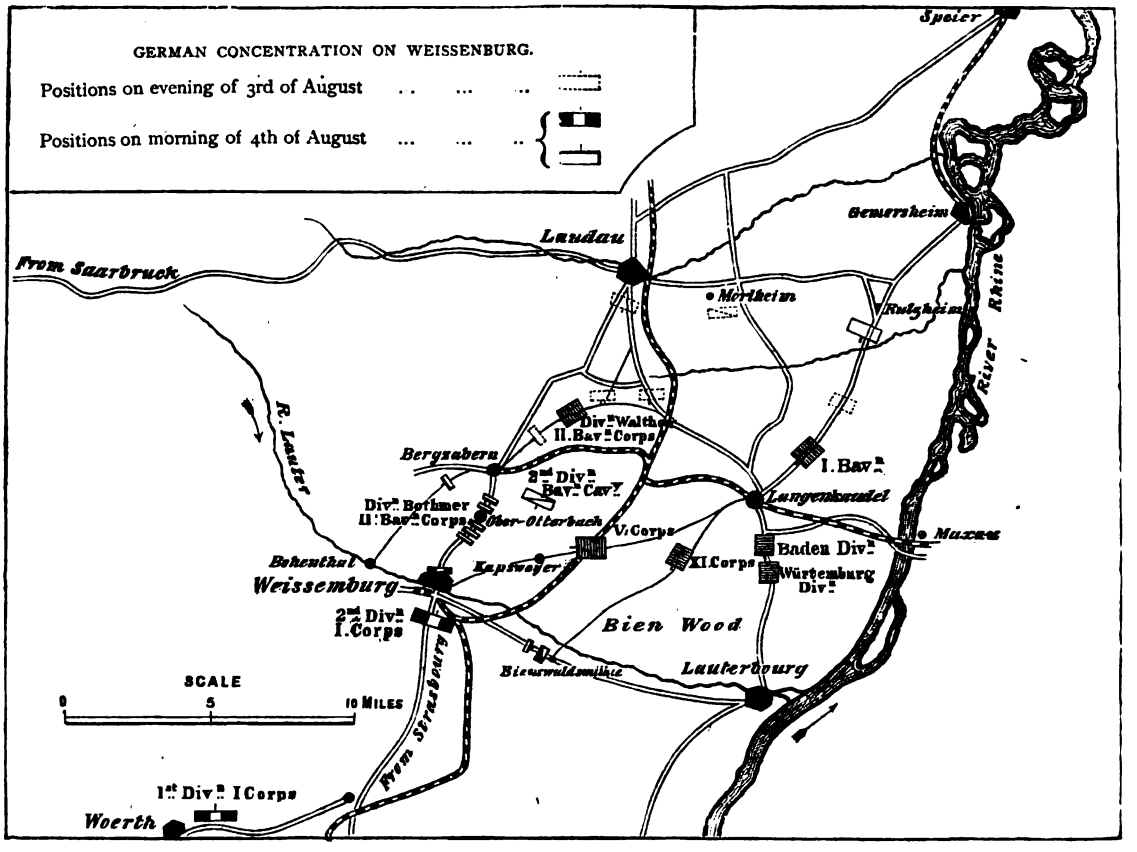
GENERAL UHRICH ON THE DEFENCE OF STRASBURG.

REPLYING to accusations made against him with regard to the defence of Strasburg, General Uhrich said, in a letter to his cousin, M. A. Boyé, dated Bâle, October 14th, 1870:—

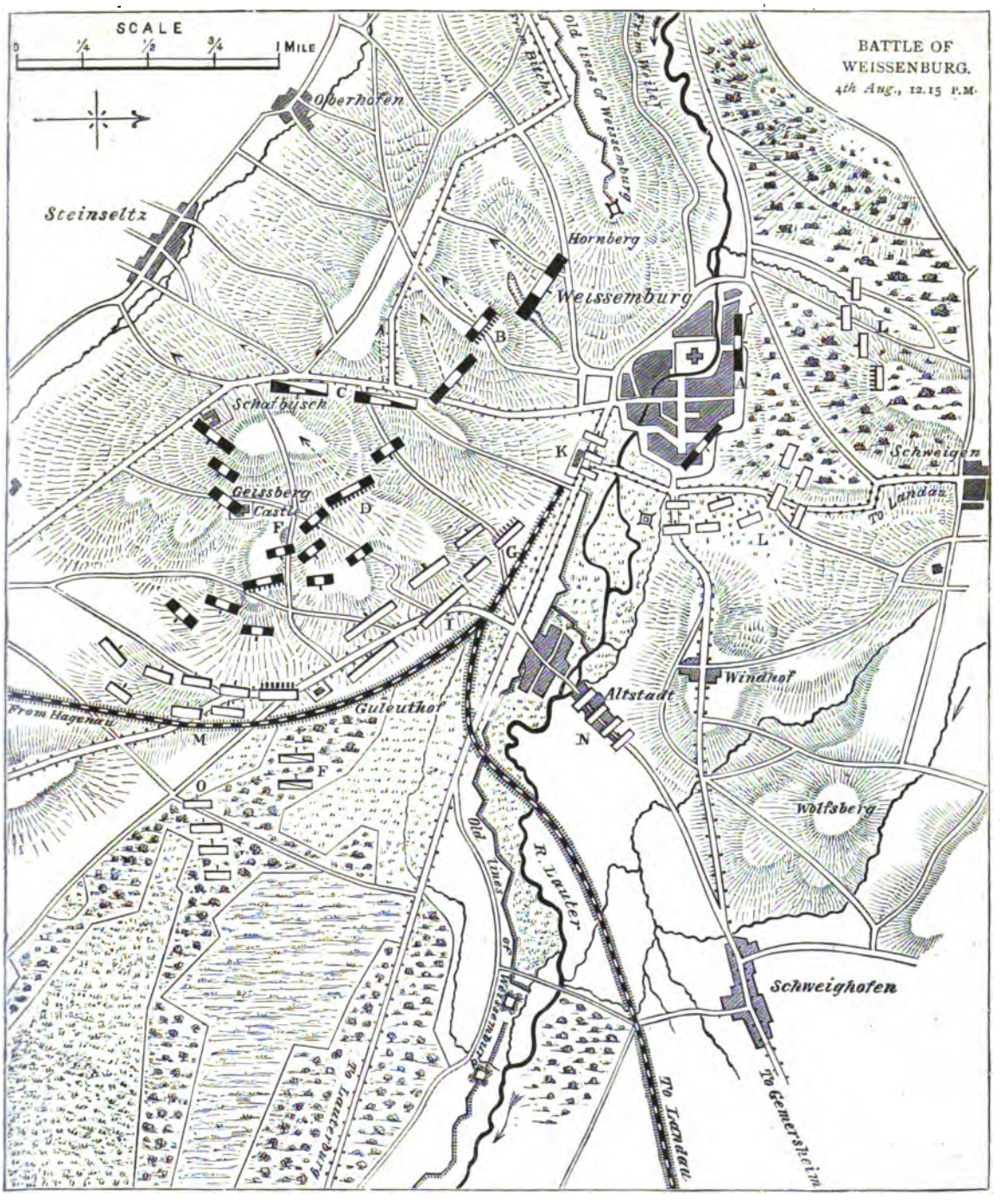
"The road to Strasburg is open. Any one may go there, and see the citadel destroyed, the ramparts torn up, the artillery unfit for use, the advanced works rendered untenable, and two of the bastions with breaches. He may stand before the ruins of the public buildings, and see the remains of the private houses. If he will try to realise the showers of iron, lead, and fire which fell upon the places where the defence was conducted—if he will examine the powerful and hitherto unknown projectiles thrown by two hundred pieces of cannon upon us—so far from saying that the surrender of the town was premature, he will feel astonishment that it was possible to sustain for thirty-eight days and nights a bombardment which up to this time is without precedent. The state of affairs was complicated by the loss of 35,000 rockets, burnt with the arsenal of the citadel, and which it was impossible to replace. In spite of this, however, we might have held our ground had the body of the place remained intact. But during the last day of the siege the advanced works of the enemy were rapidly extended; they crowned our covered ways, and breastworks were erected in order to protect the troops which were to make the assault. They opened two breaches—one at Bastion 12, which was practicable, and the other at Bastion 11, which two hours' exposure to fire would have rendered practicable. It was impossible for us to sustain the assault. The ramparts and the approaches, having been battered down by the powerful artillery of the enemy, would not have been tenable by the defenders of the breach, who, in less than half an hour would have been annihilated, and the enemy would then have advanced to the assault without

having to strike a blow. Was it our duty, or, rather, was it *my* duty, to expose the unfortunate city which had suffered so much to the horrors of a town taken by storm, when we had not one inducement to continue the resistance? My Council of Defence did not think so, and certainly no accusation of want of energy can be brought against it. When consulted by me, and after long-continued deliberation, it declared unanimously:—1. That the assault could not be supported with any chance of success; and 2. That the time had come for capitulation. The rest followed from this. Yes; I assert in the most emphatic manner that our military honour is untarnished. If I had been attacked only by those who are brave the day after the fight, or by those who without reflection yield to a first impression, I should have kept silence. But the word treason has been used, and that has made it incumbent upon me to protest with all the energy of a man whose conscience is clear, and who has been long tried. I appeal to a career of fifty-two years of military service, and I challenge the most minute inquiry. My character is one which will not be affected by the assertions of the ill-informed or malevolent. I might, if I thought fit, speak of the carelessness which left Strasburg without garrison, without sufficient artillery, without any body of engineers. I might also divulge other truths; but this would lead me beyond that which is necessary for my personal defence, and to that I wish to confine myself."

Some further statements in vindication of his conduct were made by General Uhrich, in the early summer of 1872, in a letter to the *Evénement*, pending the inquiry into the surrender of Strasburg which was about to be made by the Capitulations



Committee. At the breaking out of the war, General Uhrich was sixty-nine years of age, and on the retired list; but he volunteered his services and solicited a post of danger in one of the eastern fortresses. He arrived at Strasburg on the 31rst of July, and at once sent a despatch to the Minister of War, informing him that the military zone was built or planted over, thus securing cover to a besieging army, and hindering the play of the artillery belonging to the fortress itself. He announced his intention of destroying these obstructions; but he was immediately informed by the War Office that he must not touch them, except in the last extremity, and after he had consulted the civil authorities. Of the garrison, General Uhrich gives a very poor account. It was a heterogeneous collection of men belonging to various



FORCES ENGAGED.

FRENCH.

A. Two Battalions in Weissenburg.
B. Two ditto and one Battery.
C. Two Cavalry Regiments (11th Chasseurs and 3rd Hussars).
D. Mitrailleuse Battery.
E. { Artillery of Douay's Division (three Batteries).
{ 50th, 74th, 78th, and 1st Turco Regiments (twelve Battalions).

GERMAN.

M. 41st Brigade (11th Corps). O. 42nd Brigade (11th Corps).
I. 18th Brigade (5th Corps). N. 17th Brigade (5th Corps).
G. Artillery of 5th Corps. F. Cavalry of 9th and 10th Divisions.
K. { Two Battalions 47th Regiment (18th Brigade 5th Corps).
{ One ditto 58th Regiment (17th Brigade 5th Corps).
L 4th Division and Bavarian Corps.

bodies, including, besides the regular troops and Mobiles, a number of Custom-house officials, and a squad of sailors sent to manœuvre the Rhine flotilla by which a French army corps was to have invaded Germany. The force ultimately amounted in all to 10,000 men, of whom 4,000 were fugitives from

the armies already beaten—a ragged, disorganised crew, whose very appearance spread panic. The forts and outworks planned in 1868 had not yet been erected. The powder in the magazines was not properly secured against ignition by the shells of the enemy. The Mobile Guards were undrilled and destitute of uniforms and arms, and the Line regiments were not much better. On the eighth day of his command, General Uhrich was summoned to surrender; on the tenth he was completely invested; and on the fourteenth the bombardment began. In the course of his statement, the general is forced to make the ignominious confession that during the siege he was often compelled to wink at cowardice and insubordination, because his bad troops were so numerous that, had he punished all such, he would soon have been left without a garrison. After a while, however, something like discipline was established, and General Uhrich speaks with high commendation of several of the National Guards who worked the guns on the ramparts, of certain artillerymen left behind by MacMahon, of the firemen who toiled heroically in extinguishing the flames caused by the German bombs, and of the patience and spirit of passive resistance exhibited by the townspeople. Mining galleries and other necessary works could not be constructed, for lack of sappers and miners; but the paviors of the town erected some defences, which, however, the Prussian guns levelled as soon as they were made. The general remarks that Strasburg, of all the fortified places that fell in 1870 and 1871, was the only one on which the enemy opened a trench, or which stood its *enceinte* being breached. Its artillery was dismounted, its ramparts broken down, its citadel fired, a fourth of its garrison destroyed, 1,200 of its inhabitants struck by projectiles, 10,000 driven out of their houses by Prussian bombs, and a third of the whole town burnt. Yet, under these terrible conditions, Strasburg resisted two months, during which time 200,000 projectiles rained down upon the city. "It was breached in ten places," continues Uhrich, "before it surrendered, and, according to the report of a colonel of Engineers, made on the 27th of August, the breach of bastion No. 11 was then practicable, and likely to be stormed on the 28th. We had not one chance in a thousand of being able to defend this breach. The powerful artillery of the enemy, converging upon it, would have scattered our men like chaff before the wind. We should have been dispersed, annihilated; and the storming party could have entered without striking a single blow. Should I have exposed Strasburg to an assault, and probably a sack? I believe not. and on my death-bed I am convinced that I shall rejoice because I refrained from such a needless and atrocious piece of folly."

With their usual fickleness, and their habit of wreaking vengeance on the unfortunate, the Parisians made a god of Uhrich while the defence was being maintained, and unjustly trampled on him when, from no fault of his, he failed. But his reputation will be safe in history.

XIII.

THE SURRENDER OF ROUEN.

ALLUSION has been made, at p. 34, Vol. II., of this History, to the spiritless way in which, according to some accounts, the town of Rouen was surrendered to the Prussians on the 5th of December, 1870. These accusations found publicity chiefly through the medium of the Havre journals; and the Municipal Council of Rouen, feeling indignant at the charges brought against them, issued a protest in which they expressed surprise that such recitals should have appeared in French papers. Addressing the editors of those papers, they said:—

"We have reason to feel surprised that you, without investigation, gave publicity to absolutely calumnious recitals. How could you have believed and written that a Prussian officer had come in during the night, attired as a civilian, to treat for a capitulation with the municipal authorities whom he had summoned to meet him at the Mairie; that the town of Rouen had effected this capitulation for a sum of twelve or of seventeen millions; that the Municipal Council were so unworthy as to give the enemy the list of mobilised men, that they might be taken prisoners of war into Prussia; and that a member of the Council had proposed to the marine Francs-tireurs to give up their arms?

"From the commencement of the war, the town of Rouen has constantly placed at the disposal of the military authorities all its resources and all its strength for the purpose of organising the defence. From the 20th of August to the 5th of December, our proceedings will show this constant desire. Captain Moucher (or Manchez), of the navy, whom the Government of Tours had appointed commander of the military subdivision, on the request of a deputation to which a member of the Council belonged, can tell of the reception he met with from the Municipal Council when he

came, at their sitting of the 22nd of November, to ask for the most active and powerful assistance which they could render for the works of the defence of the town. All steps were at once taken to place at the disposal of the military authorities all necessary workmen, thus confirming the declaration made by the Maire to Commandant Mouchez before the Council, 'that he might reckon upon the thorough concurrence of the Municipal Council, as the Council reckoned upon his own.' On the 4th of December, when the enemy was at our gates, the Municipal Council, having been consulted by General Briand as to what they proposed to do in the face of an imminent invasion, again placed under the orders of the general all the forces of the town, declaring that 'they trusted in him for the defence, because, in defending military honour, he was also defending the honour of the town.'

"The night passed in anxiety; the Municipal Council had declared itself *en permanence;* the Administration was sitting in the Hôtel de Ville; the Sedentary National Guard was awaiting the signal of departure from the military authorities; when, at five o'clock in the morning, to our perfect astonishment, General Briand announced his retreat, asserting that all defence was impossible. In vain did the delegates of the Council, accompanied by the officers of the National Guard, wait upon him. He replied by a steady refusal. The Prefect arrived in the midst of the sitting of the Municipal Council, and gave certain information of the departure of the general. 'The responsibility of the Administration and of the Municipal Council,' he said, 'is completely covered in the face of the resolution come to by the military authorities.' We were reduced to impotence, and we made this known by the following proclamation prepared in unison with the Prefect :—

"'The Prefect, the Administration, and the Municipal Council to their Fellow-citizens.

"'Yesterday we made an appeal for the defence of the town to your patriotic devotion. The military authorities promised an energetic defence. This morning, at four o'clock, General Briand confirmed to us this determination, and the National Guard, at the sound of the *générale*, was assembled under arms. At five o'clock General Briand apprised the Maire that he considered any defence impossible in the face of forces too imposing, and that he was giving orders to beat a retreat. One of the Adjoints, accompanied by several officers of our National Guard, went to inquire of him this morning what were his latest decisions. The general persisted in his determination, and has left the town with all the troops under his command. The Prefect, who came to the Hôtel de Ville, testifies to the accuracy of this statement, and invites the declaration of the Council. In this cruel extremity it was important to let you know the share of responsibility which attaches to each person. Other and principal duties will arise, and we will constrain ourselves to discharge them without shrinking.—Rouen, December 5th, 1870. (Signed by the Prefect, the Maire, the Adjoints, and the members of the Municipal Council.')

"A few hours later, when the enemy invaded the hall of our deliberations, the Maire could only say, 'You are here by force. The French troops left us this morning; we are therefore compelled to submit to your orders.' We denounce to public opinion, as absolutely false, all the circumstances imagined by M. Merlen and other correspondents. It is false that there were negotiations for a capitulation. It is false that a list of the mobilised men was given to the Prussians. It is false that any Municipal Councillor went down to the square of the Hôtel de Ville, and proposed to the marine Francs-tireurs, or to any other corps, to surrender their arms."

This document was signed by the Mayor, the Adjoints, and the members of the Municipal Council.

XIV.

THE SINKING OF ENGLISH COLLIERS IN THE SEINE.

Some additional particulars with respect to this affair were accidentally passed over in the narrative of the events contained in Chapter VII., Vol. II. They are here given in full, as being necessary to a complete view of the case.

In the course of January, 1871, Mr. Alderman Candlish, M.P., and Mr. R. M. Hudson, borough magistrates of Sunderland, took the depositions of the captains of some of the colliers sunk by the Prussians. The statements previously made (which will be found on pp. 87-8 of the present volume) were those of a portion of the crews of the vessels. The evidence taken before Messrs. Candlish and Hudson, as reported in the *Times* of January 11th, 1871, was as follows:—

"The vessels sunk by the Prussians were the *Jane Tindell*, commanded by Mr. Thomas Adamson; the *McLaren*, commanded by Spoor Hodgson (both belonging to Mr. John Tindell); and the *Alice*, commanded by Thomas Embleton, the property of Thomas Minnikin. Captain Embleton's statement was that he arrived at Duclair on the 19th of December, 1870, when he was hailed by the Prussians, and let go his anchor. He had his English ensign flying at the time. He did not see any of the Prussian authorities that

day. On the following day, he, with the other captains, saw the chief military authority, and asked for permission to proceed down the river. They were told they could not do so, but had better go back to Rouen, and received a permit to do so. When they were leaving, the officer said to them in English, 'Take my advice: go back to Rouen, for this is not a safe place for you.' They returned to their vessels, and found the *Ann* sunk, and the *Sally Gale* being towed out to be scuttled. The *Alice* was prevented leaving for Rouen, on account of the darkness; and on the next day (the 21st) nine or ten Prussians went on board, and took full possession of the ship. The commander of the soldiers, in the best way he could, gave him to understand that he was going to sink the ship, saying, 'I am going to *couler* (sink) your ship; the general will come, and give you a paper for the money.' When the officer took possession, he told him the vessel belonged to a neutral country, and showed him the flag; but it was of no use; they towed her away, and sunk her. He afterwards saw one of the military authorities on shore, who asked him the price of his ship. He received a paper, properly signed and sealed, in German, certifying that the officer had 'requisitioned' the *Alice*, the value of which was estimated at £2,400. He did not ask for money. He got part of his clothes. A note was sent to the British Vice-Consul (Mr. Herring) at Rouen, who sent to Duclair, and went on board the Prussian steam-tug to protest against the sinking of the ships. After the ships were sunk, the crews got leave to go to Rouen (a distance of thirty miles), there being no shelter at Duclair. They went part of the way in their boats, which were afterwards broken up by the Prussians. They were afterwards sent on to London. The Prussians did not behave badly to them or rob them, and his ship was not fired at.—Captain Adamson, of the *Jane Tindell*, said he left Rouen on the 17th of December, with a properly stamped permit to England. After being once overhauled by the Prussians, the vessel arrived at La Fontaine on the 19th. There was a strong breeze, and he anchored to prevent the ship leaving the channel. His anchor was on the ground when the Prussians shot twice over the ship; one shot went over the bows, and, the ship swinging at the time, the second went between the masts, and into the river. He considered they fired across his bows, which was the usual signal to bring up; they did not fire at him. No one boarded him; and three-quarters of an hour afterwards, in consequence of the wind counteracting the tide, he dropped down the river without any hindrance. He arrived at Duclair on the 18th, and took in ballast until midday of the 20th, when, although he had a permit, he went and asked the authorities to permit him to proceed to England. The official wrote something in German on his permit, and gave him to understand that he could not go to England, but must proceed to Rouen, as it was not safe to remain at Duclair, the French gunboats being expected. In returning to his ship, he found the schooner *Ann* was sunk. On the 21st, about three o'clock in the afternoon, the Prussians took possession of the ship, and the soldiers cut the moorings, hove up the anchor, and jumped into the hold with augers to scuttle her. All this was done without asking any questions of him. He was afterwards asked to haul down his flag, but he declined. The ship was then sunk. The Vice-Consul got him an agreement for a payment of £1,800, the value of his ship, from the Prussians.—Captain Hodgson, of the *McLaren*, related a similar story. The Consul got him permission to go to the extent of the Prussian lines, to take in his ballast. He left Rouen on the 14th, and, having been twice overhauled by the Prussians, arrived at Duclair on the 19th, when he began to take in his ballast. He detailed the interview with the official who gave them the pass to go to Rouen, when they were prevented doing so by the state of the tide. On the 21st, about a score of Prussians went on board, and called upon him to haul his flag down; but he would not, and to the best of his belief the ship went down with it flying. The Consul protested against the proceedings, and obtained him an assessment for £2,000 for the ship. He never saw the flag trampled on."

All due weight should of course be given to these statements of the captains of the vessels; but it must be observed that they are very far from disproving the allegations of the sailors. In the first place, the evidence is simply that of the captains of *three* of the colliers sunk, whereas at least *eight* vessels were so treated. In the second place, it should be borne in mind that the chief solicitude of the owners of the ships, who would probably be represented by the captains, would naturally be for the recovery of the value of their property; and this having been guaranteed to them by the Prussian authorities, they had every reason to desire to avoid giving offence, and to let matters remain as they were. The case was very different with the men. According to *their* version, they were robbed of money and personal property, and treated with brutal violence; they also alleged that the English flag was insulted. With respect to the last-named incident, it is clear that the statement of the captain of the *McLaren*, that "he never saw the flag trampled on," does not prove that the flag was not so treated on board the *Sylph*, as affirmed by the mate of that vessel, or in some of the other colliers. The captains were evidently unwilling witnesses against the Prussians; there was an obvious desire on their part to put the affair in as favourable a light as possible, and to let it pass. It cannot, therefore, be said that the conduct of the Prussian authorities was justified by the statements of the Englishmen themselves; and it is impossible to resist an uneasy feeling that the Government of Mr. Gladstone failed to assert the claims of the country with sufficient vigour and dignity, out of apprehension of the Power which was then crushing France.

XV.

COUNTS CHAUDORDY AND BISMARCK.

At pp. 221-4 of Vol. I., a summary has been given of the correspondence between Counts Chaudordy and Bismarck on the mutual accusations of cruelty brought by French and Germans against one another. To Count Bismarck's circular of January 9th, 1871, M. de Chaudordy, as Delegate Minister of Foreign Affairs, replied from Bordeaux on the 25th of the same month. In this document (which took the form of a circular to the representatives of France abroad) he charged the Prussian Chancellor with having evaded the real points at issue, and thus tacitly acknowledged the truth of the accusations brought against the German armies. He remarked that the perceptions of the German people, until recently intent on literature and philosophy, had been obscured by a cloud of blood, and by the caprices of force and of military absolutism. He then proceeded to a repetition of his charges against the invading troops, and to a denial of the Prussian accusation that the French made use of explosive bullets. Count Chaudordy continued :—

"Count Bismarck, at a loss for arguments in favour of the doctrine he ventures to raise against us, attempts to take up the naval question; but our proofs have already been given. I have placed before you, and before the eyes of the public, the long discussion which has resulted in the seizure of French hostages by the Prussian Government, who have thus violated every vestige of right and justice. The Chancellor says the German prisoners have been ill-treated by us. It will be sufficient, with regard to this point, to refer you to Appendix No. 3, and to add the following fact :—'Mr. Pratt, surgeon with the American ambulance, has lately visited Pau. He has there inspected the American ambulances, and the ambulances in which there were Prussian wounded; he has also visited the localities set apart for prisoners. He has everywhere, on questioning, been met by expressions of gratitude for the care taken of them, and for the manner in which the military authorities look after them.'

"He was, moreover, commissioned on the eve of departure to take charge of letters for the head-quarters of the King of Prussia and of Prince Frederick Charles, testifying to the humane treatment afforded to the Prussians in France. Mr. Pratt has authorised us to publish these particulars, and to mention his name. Count Bismarck refers once more to a subject already dwelt upon by him in a preceding communication. He accuses the French army of having been wanting in honour, and he accuses the French Government of connivance. This point has been the subject of a special refutation. You will find it in enclosure No. 3. I will only add that the Government does not grant premiums to captive paroled officers who succeed in escaping, but a supplementary money payment is made to those who, without breaking their parole, are able to reach the territory of their country. This supplementary payment, moreover, is always made to every officer who, through an incident of war, loses his field effects.

"The Chancellor further impugns the conduct of Algerian tirailleurs. These soldiers, who are very few in number, have repeatedly given the most striking proofs of their devotion to France, which has become their country; but it has in no instance been proved that they had resorted to such barbarous acts with regard to the enemy as the Prussian armies have been guilty of towards the unoffending inhabitants of the country traversed by them."

The concluding portions of Count Chaudordy's circular have reference to recriminations which it is not necessary now to reproduce.

XVI.

M. PICARD AND THE COMMUNE.

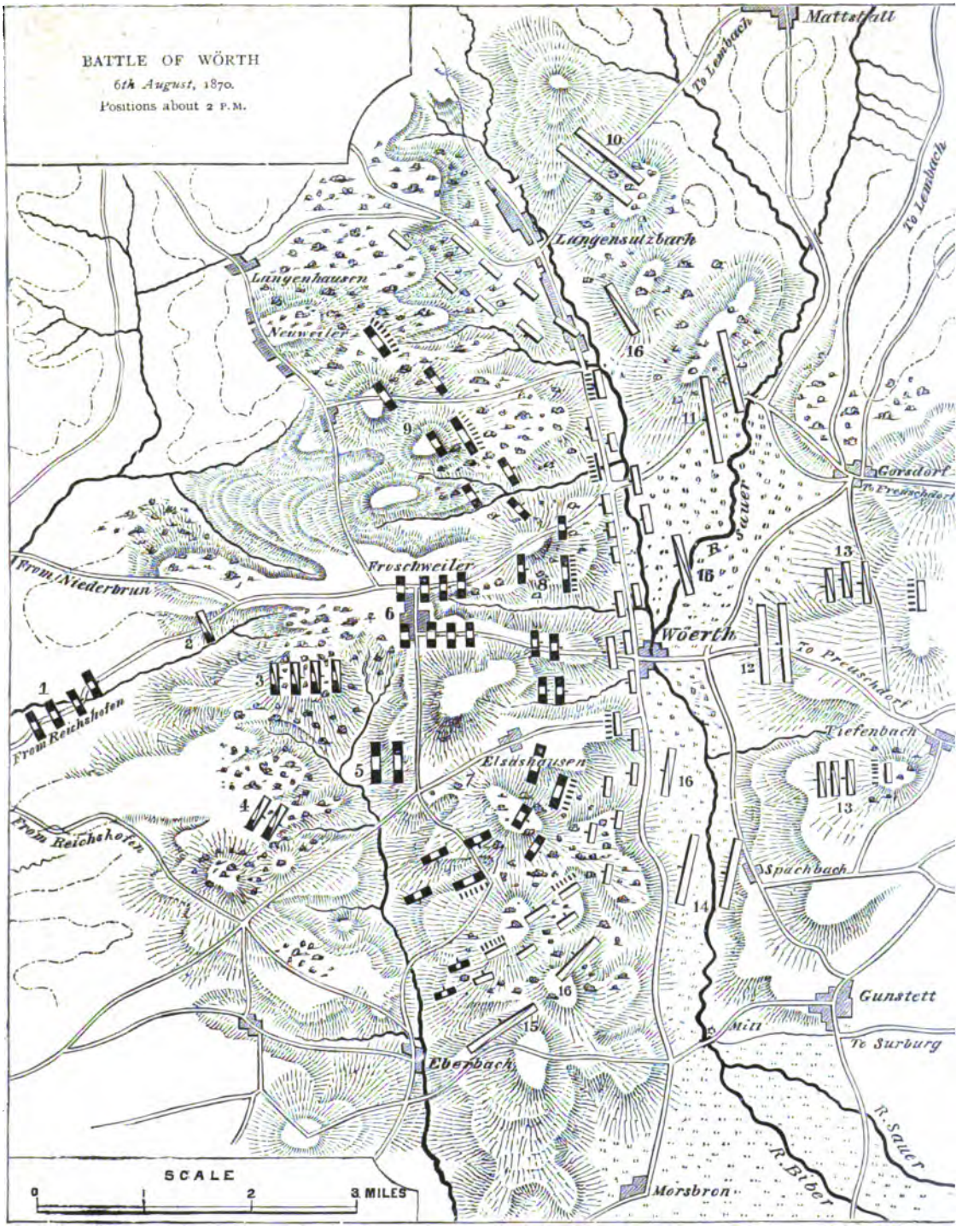
Some singular statements with respect to the dilatory and apathetic conduct of M. Picard (Minister of the Interior), previous to the outbreak of the Communal insurrection, were made by General d'Aurelles de Paladines before the Committee of Inquiry into the causes of that movement. The general related that M. Thiers, who had been in Paris, arrived at Bordeaux on the 15th of March; that M. Jules Favre, who remained in the capital, had the direction of the branch of the Government installed there; that his colleagues were M. Picard, of the Interior, and M. Pouyer-Quertier, Minister of Finance; and that all the other Ministers were replaced by their first secretaries, or heads of sections. M. Jules Favre informed General de Paladines that the Cabinet Council met every

evening, towards nine o'clock, and he requested him to be present at its sittings. "I went," said the general, "every evening, on his invitation. The opinion I formed from what I saw at the Council-board was, that, in the grave and difficult situation in which the country found itself, little was to be hoped from the efforts of the Ministers. Their meetings generally began at half-past nine. Sometimes the Council did not open till eleven at night, because the members had not arrived sooner. The proceedings commenced by a few words about public business, or State affairs. The rest of the time was passed in gay conversation, M. Picard laying himself out to crack jokes and tell good stories. M. Jules Favre did not talk much, but his colleague of the Interior was hardly ever silent. If he could not keep up an amusing conversation with his neighbour on the right, he tried what he could do with the one on the left. I admit that this was not business-like; but what I say is literally true. The talk and fun went on till one o'clock in the morning. Occasionally a despatch was brought from the Prefecture of Police, from a Ministry, or from the Staff, to keep us informed of the situation. General Vinoy often lost



MARSHAL LEBŒUF.

patience. He sat next me, and we used to say that it was pure loss of time for us to attend these Ministerial Councils. As commander of the National Guard, I chiefly corresponded with M. Picard. I gave him daily a report of what was going on. His answer generally was, 'Oh, it's nothing. We're used to that sort of thing. You know of what curious stuff the population of Paris is made.'" General de Paladines added that M. Picard was incredibly careless in business matters; and he instanced his mode of dealing with the



FORCE ENGAGED.

FRENCH.

1. Division Lespart (Fifth Corps).
2. Light Cavalry Brigade (Septeuil).
3. Cavalry Division (Bonnemain).
4. Cavalry Brigade (Michel).
5. Division Dumesnil (7th Corps).
6. Second Division and Reserves.
7. Fourth Division.
8. Third Division.
9. First Division.

GERMAN.

10. Second Bavarian Corps.
11. First Bavarian Corps.
12. Fifth Army Corps.
13. Cavalry Division.
14. Eleventh Army Corps.
15. Würtemburg Cavalry Brigade.
16. Divisional Cavalry.

officers of the mobilised National Guard, who had been promised a rise of salary, and the same pecuniary advantages as the officers of the Line. A formal understanding to this effect had been given

but, as the siege dragged on, the Government (according to de Paladines) began to repent of having saddled the State with so heavy an expense. It was accordingly decided that no allowance for outfits should be made, but that, by way of compensation, two months' extra pay should be given. The first month was paid in February, but the second month was not paid. "When I took the command of the National Guard," continued the general, "I was overwhelmed with demands and complaints. I understood nothing of the matter, and asked an explanation from a member of my Staff, who gave me a very clear one. In consequence of what he told me, I at once waited on M. Picard, to demand the entire fulfilment of the engagement made by the Government. He received me in his gay, jaunty way; and when I told him on what errand I had come, he said, 'Make your mind easy, and pay them the other month.' 'But I must have the order.' 'Nothing easier; I will give you one. Yes, I will see that you are given one.' 'But,' I interrupted, 'it must be a written order.' 'You shall have one; go and tell those officers that the matter is settled.' I went, as I was authorised, and thought the affair was arranged; but the complaints and demands, I found, went on. Numbers of officers came to claim what was due to them, and I put them off with quotations from M. Picard. At length I summoned my principal Staff officer, Roger du Nord, and instructed him to prove to the duns that what was due to them would most certainly be paid. He objected, telling me that the shortest way was to pay the debt at once. I positively refused to do this, unless furnished with M. Picard's written order; for the sum-total amounted to 900,000f. M. Roger du Nord then went to expostulate with the Minister of the Interior, and to inform him of my determination. Pressed in this way, M. Picard turned round, and refused plump to give any order. 'Since the money is not paid,' he said, 'let them wait some time longer for their indemnity.'" Very shortly afterwards the Communistical insurrection broke out, and the result was that the indemnity was never paid at all. Such was the way in which the "Moderate Republic" managed its affairs.

XVII.

FRENCH ARMY CONTRACTS.

An interesting debate on Army Contracts took place in the French Assembly in May, 1872. On the 4th of that month, the Duke d'Audiffret-Pasquier presented to the Chamber the Report of the Committee on the English Contracts for the French Armies—those entered into by the Imperial Government, and those for which the Government of the National Defence was responsible. The Committee had been at work for more than a year, and had examined about two thousand contracts and accounts, relating to an expenditure of 360,000,000 francs (or upwards of £14,000,000), out of which 11,000,000 francs had been saved to the country. It had been the custom of the War Department to put the contracts into the hands of intermediate agents, who enriched themselves, to the extent of many millions of francs, by purchasing the worst commodities and charging the highest prices possible. The grossest jobbery appears to have been perpetrated. A Mr. Hedley, it was stated, was willing to supply cartridges at the rate of 100 francs. "Thereupon," said the Duke, "a certain Count intervenes. I do not publish his name, because there was great hesitation before the Committee, and people would not speak out. But this 'Count' comes, and says that Mr. Hedley 'wanted more;' and the contract, which had been signed one day at the rate of 100 francs, was re-signed the next day at the rate of 180 francs! When we inquired what could possibly have brought about this difference of 80 per cent. in twenty-four hours, we could discover nothing to account for it but the hand of this famous 'Count.'" Another speculator got a contract for cartridges, which he sold, for a consideration, to one Larivière. The latter received 240,000 francs, but the cartridges were never forthcoming. Larivière, in order to conceal his frauds, was permitted to carry off clandestinely a quantity of refuse cartridges, and smuggle them into vaults and cellars at Blaye, where they lay and rotted, until it was impossible to say whether they had ever been good or bad. A house which had been strictly excluded from all participation in Government transactions, and which was afterwards prosecuted for the forgery of trade-marks, was nevertheless allowed to enter into thirty contracts, out of which it had gained a million. The state of the arsenals and military stores, at the period of the rupture with Prussia, was deplorable. To maintain them, 400 millions had been voted annually, and

440 millions had been assigned for the transformation of war material. It was said that there ought to have been 10,000 field-pieces in stock; but no more than 2,000 were to be found. Of muskets, 2,000,000 were unaccounted for. In 1870, no one knew what was wanting, or what was missing. M. d'Audiffret-Pasquier did not throw the blame of these transactions on the principals of the War Office, but imputed it to the subordinates. There was in fact no effective supervision of the contracts. One so-called controller not only fabricated false bills, but received pay from those whom it was his duty to check; and an officer of the Staff obtained periodical sums of money from a house whose supplies the Minister of War had appointed him to overlook. The alleged malversations appear to have been as numerous and as shameful under the Government of the National Defence as under the Empire.

These statements produced a tumult of indignation; and the subject was again brought forward on the 21st of May by M. Rouher, who undertook the defence of the Empire. After premising that he would carefully abstain from touching on political questions, he said :—

"In the sitting of May 4th, the Duke d'Audiffret-Pasquier, examining the question of the contracts, enunciated this doctrine—that the business in hand is not to attack such or such an individual, but to hold the bureaux (Ministerial offices) responsible. Ministers pass away, he said, and Governments fall; but the bureaux remain, and with them the deplorable abuses which they encourage. That doctrine I repudiate in the name of justice, public law, and the reality of facts. To demonstrate the truth of my words, I shall pass in review the contracts which you are called on to examine. Twenty-two of them were made by Count de Palikao; they apply to 447,000 rifles and 1,700,000 cartridges, and represent a sum of 167 millions of francs. All these arrangements, with a single exception, contained a clause authorising their annulment in case of a failure of delivery within a fortnight. Only two of them were in process of execution before September 4th, representing altogether 823,000 francs. The completion of the other contracts fell to the charge of the Government of the National Defence, for a sum of 48 millions, from 25 to 30 millions of which were carried out. The present Government does not enjoy perfect immunity from these charges, for it is interested in purchases to the extent of from two to three millions, in virtue of contracts which were only executed after February 12th, 1871. Such is the arithmetical physiognomy of the debate, and I think the Duke has committed an error in attributing only a very limited responsibility to the Government of the National Defence, when it is responsible for at least four-fifths of the total. The reporter addressed nearly the whole of his criticisms to the bureaux. Gentlemen, from August 24th to September 4th, there is only one man responsible, and that person, who does not shelter himself behind the bureaux, is the Count de Palikao. He it was who gave the orders; he had his reasons and his opinions, which I shall presently endeavour to justify. The bureaux are no longer responsible for the transactions which took place posterior to the revolution of the 4th of September; for when that event occurred, a committee of armament was formed, and invested with full powers. Soon after, part of the Government installed itself at Tours. But what remained of the bureaux? Most of the young officers who belonged to them were before the enemy; others had remained in Paris; the utmost to be found was a commandant, assisted by four officers and a few clerks. And, besides, they exercised their functions surrounded by confidential agents whom M. Gambetta very rightly had placed above them."

Coming to a consideration of the contracts signed by Count de Palikao, especially the bargains for arms made in England, M. Rouher denied that they could be correctly described as useless, unrealisable, and effected at too high prices. Those contracts had been necessitated by the early misfortunes of the war, and by the demand, arising from every side, for the immediate arming of the National Guard and of all France. A large number of weapons had to be found at a moment's notice, and M. Picard, M. Ferry, and M. Thiers, argued that, from the instant the safety of the country was at stake, contracts for arms might be made with neighbouring countries. "Under such circumstances," said M. Rouher, "there could be no haggling about prices. Moreover, there was a necessity for employing intermediaries, in presence of the laws which regulated neutrality. Remember this, gentlemen, as it is a capital point, which has given rise to numerous remonstrances addressed by Prussia to England. In a word, the business which we were engaged in was a contraband trade, and we could not pause for a discussion about prices. The contracts concluded between the 28th of August and the 4th of September were made with honesty, prudence, and sincerity, and do not deserve the severe comments of which they have been the subject. The pressure was enormous, and could not possibly be resisted; every one would have inveighed against the Minister who should have refused to sign those agreements, and would have declared him responsible for the consequences." M. Rouher characterised as fantastic the assertion that 750,000 francs profit had been made in a single day by one of the contractors. He added that the Minister of War, in giving M. Chollet an advance of a million to execute his contract, conformed to the precedents of 1815 for the organisa-

tion of the army which fought at Waterloo, and even of 1823, at the period of the difficulties raised by the war in Spain. The same precedents were followed by the Government of the National Defence. With respect to the Hedley contract, the original agreement (said M. Rouher) was for 32,000 muskets at 120 francs each; but the price of the cartridges could not be ascertained at the moment, and the sum was ultimately fixed at 180 francs. At a later period, the Government of the National Defence purchased rifles at 190 francs. If any one guilty of culpable operations could be discovered—any "Count" whose name was suppressed—let him be prosecuted. He (M. Rouher) was not there to defend him, or any criminality whatever. The vaults of Blaye, in which M. Larivière was said to have placed 1,500,000 cartridges, were in reality only magazines, so that it was not astonishing that the cartridges should have been deteriorated by humidity. As regarded the state of the arsenals, M. Rouher said:—"The Duke d'Audiffret-Pasquier, after referring to the habits of the bureaux, asks whether on the 1st of July, 1870, the arsenals really contained the number of cannon indicated by General Suzanne, and concludes in the negative. An official document I have in my hand shows that on that day there were—in field artillery, 3,216 rifled 4, 8, or 12-pounder guns, 190 mitrailleuses, 581 rifled mountain pieces, and 3,379 smooth-bore cannon; in siege artillery, 12,356 guns, howitzers, or mortars. Those figures differ widely from the return given by the reporter. As for the muskets, another document shows that on the 1st of July, 1870, there were in the army or the State arsenals 1,007,000 chassepôts, besides 30,000 given to the navy; also 342,000 muzzle-loading muskets. Thus, to the affirmations of the Duke d'Audiffret-Pasquier I oppose two returns, the authenticity of which the Minister of War must admit." With some remarks of a political character, which led to great uproar, M. Rouher concluded his speech.

The Duke d'Audiffret-Pasquier replied on the 22nd of May. He made a very violent attack on the general policy of the Empire; reasserted the truth of what he had affirmed with regard to the fraudulent contracts of the Imperial Government, and the condition of the arsenals; alleged that the 10,000 guns spoken of by M. Rouher were mere bronze tubes of a very ancient date; and taunted the fallen Minister of the Empire with the words which he had addressed to Napoleon III. on the outbreak of the war, and in which he spoke of the army having, during the previous four years, been brought to the highest possible degree of perfection. The men of September, added the Duke, were compelled to buy arms as fast as they could, owing to the emptiness of the arsenals. In his attack on the Empire—which, he said, had left the country a legacy of demoralisation—M. d'Audiffret-Pasquier created a great effect by applying to the Emperor Napoleon the words uttered by Augustus Cæsar on hearing of the defeat and slaughter of the Roman army, under Quintilius Varus, by the German chieftain, Arminius—"Vare, Vare, redde legiones!" (Varus, Varus, give me back my legions!) He concluded his speech by a high commendation of M. Thiers, and by the expression of a hope that, whatever happened to the country, it might never again fall into the unworthy hands which had ruined it. The address was received with boisterous applause, and M. Rouher, in the course of his rejoinder, was interrupted with hoots and yells, and treated with all the furious ill-manners which Frenchmen generally exhibit towards their adversaries, especially when they are unfortunate. M. Gambetta followed the Duke d'Audiffret-Pasquier in his attack on the Empire; and ultimately the following resolution was adopted without any dissentients:—"The Assembly, confiding in the exertions of the Committee on Contracts, and maintaining its resolution to prosecute all persons responsible, whether before or after the 4th of September, passes to the order of the day." There had doubtless been a good deal of jobbery; but the Republic was to the full as blamable as the Empire.

THE END.

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